A PATRIOT LAD OF OLD BOSTON

RUSSELL GORDON CARTER

"You Needn't Be Afraid of This Tea; Nobody's Paid a Tax on It."

A PATRIOT LAD
OF OLD BOSTON

BY

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LONG WHARF
ROWES WHARF
CHARLES RIVER
BATTERY
DORCHESTER FLATS
MUDDY RIVER
BATTERY
DORCHESTER NECK
DEER I.

INTRODUCTION

THE story of Don Alden is the story of Boston during the British occupation. Like the sturdy out-of-doors boy of to-day, Don was fond of hunting and fishing and trapping; it is of little wonder therefore that Glen Drake, the old trapper from the North, formed an instant liking for him.

But from the moment that the Port Bill went into effect—yes, and before that unfortunate event—there were other things than hunting and fishing to think about. Don's aunt, a heroic, kindly woman of old New England, refused to leave her home in Pudding Lane, even though the town seemed likely to become a battle ground. And Don was not the boy to forsake his aunt in time of need.

How he helped her during the period of occupation; how he acted when his best friend cast his lot with the Tories; what he did when he suddenly found that he could save the life of one of the hated Redcoats; and what happened at the

end when Crean Brush's Tories forced their way into the house—those events and many others only go to prove that heroism is not limited by age.

There were other things also to test the courage of a lad like Don—the Battles of Concord and Lexington and of Bunker Hill, the felling of the Liberty Tree, and the many small annoyances that both Tories and Redcoats committed to make life a little more miserable for the suffering townsfolk. But he met them all in such a way as to deserve the words of praise from the one man whom he admired more than any other—General Washington.

Boston in the days of the Revolution resembled Boston of to-day in one noticeable respect: many of the streets were narrow and crooked and bore the names that they bear at present. But the differences between the old town and the new are many and astonishing. In Revolutionary days mud flats, which were exposed at low water, lay where South Boston and the Back Bay are now situated; near where the present North Station stands there used to be a broad placid mill-pond that extended down almost to Hanover Street; and to the south,

where to-day many broad streets and avenues cross one another over a wide space, there used to be a very narrow strip of land known as the Neck —to have cut it would have made of the town an island. Such in brief was the Boston of Donald Alden and of his friends.

If Don is a fictitious hero he is at least typical of many another patriot lad who, too young to serve a great cause under arms, did serve it nevertheless as best he could. How he cared for his Aunt Martha throughout the long trying months of British occupation and in the end foiled Crean Brush's Tories and performed a service for General Washington makes a story that is well within the beaten paths of history.

The facts of history, taken alone, are likely to seem cold and colorless; regarded from the point of view of a hero in whom we are interested, and whose life they are affecting, they glow with warmth and romance. If readers who follow the adventures of Don find that at the end of the story the Tea Party, Bunker Hill, Lexington and Concord and other important events of history are a little more real to them than they were at first, I shall be content. That is one of the purposes of the book. The other, and per-

haps the more important, is simply to provide an interesting story of a boy—a Patriot Lad of Old Boston.

THE AUTHOR.

A Patriot Lad of Old Boston

CHAPTER I

TEA AND SALT WATER

A PINK and golden sunset was flaming across Boston Common. It was one of the prettiest sunsets of the whole winter of 1773; but on that day, the sixteenth of December, few persons were in the mood to stop and admire it. For trouble had come to town.

In the Old South Meeting-House at the corner of Marlborough and Milk Streets the largest and perhaps the most important town-meeting in the history of Boston was in session. The hall was filled to overflowing, and those who had been unable to gain admittance lingered in the streets and tried to learn from their neighbors what was going on inside.

On the outskirts of the crowd in Milk Street two boys were talking earnestly. "This is a bad piece of business," said one in a low voice. "What right have we to protest against the

King's sending tea to his colonies? We're his loyal subjects, aren't we?"

His companion, an alert-looking boy with blue eyes, did not reply at once; but his eyes flashed as he glanced restlessly now at the meeting-house, now at the persons round him, many of whom he knew. At last he said, "Of course we're loyal, but we're not represented in Parliament; for that reason we shouldn't be taxed. The protest is not against the tea but against the tax that the King has put on it. At least that's what my Uncle Dave says."

"Now see here, Don," replied the boy who had spoken first, "there's going to be trouble just as sure as you're born. Take my advice and don't pick the wrong side." He lowered his voice. "Keep away from trouble-makers. Men like Sam Adams inside there are a disgrace to the town; and anyway they can't accomplish anything. There are three shiploads of tea at Griffin's Wharf; it will be landed to-night, and before many days have passed, you and I will be drinking it—as we should. Don't be a fool, Don!"

Donald Alden lifted his chin a trifle. "I don't intend to be a fool, Tom," he replied slowly.

His companion, Tom Bullard, the son of one of the wealthiest men in town, seemed pleased with the remark, though he certainly was not pleased with what was going on about him. From time to time he scowled as the sound of hand-clapping came from within the meeting-house, or as he overheard some snatch of conversation close by. "Cap'n Rotch," a tall, rugged-faced man was saying to his neighbor, "has gone with some others to Milton to ask the governor for a clearance."

"Old Hutchinson will never give it to them," was the quick reply. "He's as bad as King George."

"Well, then, if he doesn't, you watch out and see what happens." With that advice the tall man smiled in a peculiar way and a few minutes later left his companion.

Meanwhile the crowd had increased to almost twice the size it had been when Don and Tom had joined it. Don guessed that there were between six and seven thousand people inside the meeting-house and in the streets close by it, and he was astonished at the quiet nature of the gathering. Although everyone around him seemed uneasy and excited, yet they talked in

ordinary tones of voice. Occasionally a small boy would shout as he chased another in play, but for the most part even the small boys were content to wait quietly and see what was about to happen; for it seemed that something must happen soon.

Almost all of the pink and gold had faded from the sky, and a light breeze was swaying some of the signs over the doors of the shops on Milk Street and making them creak. There were lights flashing in many of the windows; and inside the Old South Meeting candles were burning.

Don and Tom edged as near as they could to the door, which was partly open. They could hear someone speaking, though the words were indistinct; they could see the heads and shoulders of some of the listeners; they could see grotesque shadows flit about the walls and ceiling as somebody moved in front of the flickering candles. It was long past supper-time, but few persons seemed to have any thought for food.

"I'm cold," said Tom, "and hungry too. Aren't you, Don?"

"No," replied Don.

He lifted his hands to loosen his collar; they

were trembling but not with cold. Something must happen soon, he thought.

Somewhere a bell was tolling, and the tones seemed to shiver in the chill air. Half an hour dragged by, slowly. And then there was a sudden commotion near the door of the church, and the buzz of conversation rose to a higher pitch. "It's Rotch!" exclaimed someone. "It's Rotch," said another; "and Governor Hutchinson has refused clearance."

The crowd pressed closer to the door. Don could see people moving about inside the meeting-house. Then he saw somebody at the far end of the hall lift his hand, and he barely distinguished the words: "This meeting can do nothing more to save the country."

An instant later there was a shout from someone on the little porch of the church, and then the startling sound of war-whoops rang in Marlborough Street. In a moment the people in the church began to pour out of the door. In Milk Street, near Bishop's Alley, Don spied half a dozen figures clothed in blankets and wearing feathered head-dresses; their faces were copper-colored, and all of them carried hatchets or axes. Where they had come from no one seemed to

have any clear idea, but as they started down the street others joined them; and the crowd followed.

"Where are you going, Don?" Tom asked sharply as his companion turned to join the throng in Milk Street.

"He's going to have a look at the King's tea, aren't you, my lad?" said a voice near by.

"Come on along," cried Don.

But Tom seized his companion's arm and held him. "Don, are you crazy?" he demanded. "Keep out of this; it's trouble; that's what it is——"

Don jerked his arm free and ran ahead; soon he was lost to Tom in the crowd. At Long Lane he caught a glimpse of bobbing headdresses. He started to run as best he could. Once he stumbled and fell to his knees, but somebody helped him quickly to his feet. "No time to stumble now," said the stranger, whoever he was.

A few moments later those at the head of the throng turned sharply to the right, and as they stumbled over the cobblestones down a narrow street Don observed that the moon was shining. In and out among the streets the throng went,

past Cow Lane, past Belcher's Lane and straight toward Griffin's Wharf. Everyone was excited, and yet there was a certain order about the whole movement.

"Remember what Rowe said in meeting?" remarked a florid-faced man whom Don recognized as a grocer from King Street. "'Who knows how tea will mingle with salt water?' Well, I guess we'll all know pretty quick."

Don felt his heart take a sudden leap. So they were going to throw the tea overboard! These were no Indians; they were Colonists, all of them! He thought he even recognized one of the leaders as the tall, rugged-faced man in the crowd who had advised his companions to wait and see what would happen if the governor refused the clearance.

Once on the wharf, the first thing the men did was to post guards, and then Don noticed that all of the little copper-colored band had pistols as well as hatchets and axes. The *Dartmouth* was the first ship to be boarded; someone demanded that the hatches be opened, and the sailors complied with the demand at once; there was no resistance. In a moment square chests with strange markings were being lifted to the deck.

Again Don observed that everything was being done in an orderly manner.

It was a night that he should long remember. The tide was low, and the three Indiamen with their high sides and ornamented sterns reminded him of huge dragons lying beside the wharf in the moonlight. He saw chest after chest broken open with axes and hatchets and then tumbled overboard into the water; he heard the low voices of the men as they worked—they seemed to be talking in Indian dialect, though he knew that it was not genuine, for now and again he would catch a word or two of English.

For a while Don leaned against one of the great warehouses and tried to guess who the "Indians" were; at one time he counted as many as fifteen of them, but he could not be sure that there were not more; for at least a hundred persons were on the wharf, helping to get rid of the tea. Some of the chests that they tossed overboard lodged on the mud flats that were out of water, but young men and boys waded in and broke them into pieces and pushed them off. It was fascinating to watch the destruction.

Don remained near the warehouse for perhaps three hours; and not until the last chest had been

tossed from the *Eleanor* and the *Beaver,* the other two tea vessels, did he realize that he was hungry; he had entirely forgotten that he had missed his supper.

Taking one last glance at the pieces of broken chests, which the turning tide was now carrying out into the harbor, he set forth toward home. At the head of Atkinson Street he heard someone call his name, and, turning, he saw Tom Bullard close behind him. "Oh, Don, wait a minute."

Don paused. "I can't wait very long," he said and grinned. "My Aunt Martha won't be very well pleased with me as it is."

"See here, Don," began Tom abruptly, "I know where you've come from, and I know what's happened down at the wharf. I know also that those men weren't Indians. The thing I want to ask you is, what do you think of it?"

"Why," replied Don slowly, "I'm afraid it won't please you, Tom, if I tell. I think we—that is, the Indians,—did the proper thing in throwing the tea overboard."

Tom stiffened. "So you're a young rebel," he said. "A young rebel! Well, I thought so all along. I'm through with you from now on."

"I'm sorry, Tom; we've been good friends."

"Well, I'm not sorry," replied Tom, turning part way round. "A young rebel!" he repeated, flinging the words over his shoulder. "Well, look out for trouble, that's all." And he crossed the street.

Don bit his lips. He had lost an old friend; Tom was a Tory. Well, he was not astonished; but he had hoped that their friendship might last through their differences.

He felt somewhat depressed as he made his way along the crooked streets to his aunt's little house in Pudding Lane. No light was burning in the store at the front where his aunt sold groceries and odds and ends of a household nature to eke out the income of his Uncle David, who was employed at MacNeal's rope yard on Hutchinson Street. He entered the small sitting-room at the back of the house. "Hello, Aunt Martha," he said cheerfully.

"Donald Alden, for goodness' sake, where have you been?" Aunt Martha Hollis dropped the stocking that she had been knitting and adjusted her spectacles.

"Well, first I went up to the town-meeting."

"Did you see your Uncle David there?"

"No, ma'am; there was an awful big crowd. I'm pretty hungry, Aunt Martha."

"What happened at the meeting?"

"Well, there was a lot of talking, and then just as it broke up, a band of Indians—that is, a band of men with tomahawks and feathers and colored faces—appeared in Milk Street and started down to Griffin's Wharf and—is there any pie, Aunt Martha?"

"Donald, go on!" said his aunt, whose fingers had begun to tremble violently.

"They boarded the three tea ships and tossed all the tea into the water. My, you should have seen them! Then they went home. Aunt Martha, I certainly am hungry."

"Was—was anybody hurt, Donald?"

"Oh, no, ma'am—except one man whom I didn't know; a chest of tea fell on him. Another man tried to put some of the tea into his pockets, but I guess he was more scared than hurt."

Aunt Martha drew a deep breath and rose from her chair. In a few minutes she had placed some cold meat and potatoes and a large slice of apple pie on the table. "Now don't eat too fast," she cautioned her nephew. Then she

seated herself again, but she did not go on with her knitting.

She was a little woman with blue eyes and silvery hair parted in the middle. She was naturally of a light-hearted disposition, though perhaps somewhat overly zealous for the welfare of her only nephew, whom she had taken to live with her eight years ago on the death of both his parents. Now her eyes were gravely thoughtful as she watched him eating.

"This is mighty good pie, Aunt Martha."

"Well, eat it slowly, then, for that's all you can have."

Don grinned and held up his empty plate, and a moment later his aunt went to the kitchen and returned with another piece. As she was setting it on the table, the door opened, and David Hollis entered. He nodded and smiled at his nephew and then strode quickly into the kitchen, where Don heard him washing his hands and face. Then Don heard his aunt and uncle talking in subdued voices. When they entered the sitting-room again Aunt Martha carried more meat and potatoes, which she placed on the table.

Uncle David, big and broad and hearty, sat down opposite his nephew. "So you were at the

wharf this evening?" he inquired. "Did you see the—the Indians?"

"I saw feathers and tomahawks and painted faces," replied Don, and Uncle David laughed and quickly lowered his hands to his lap, but not before his nephew had caught a glimpse of dark red paint round the finger-nails.

"It was a bold thing that the Mohawks did," said Uncle David. "Don't ever forget, Donald, that the men who tossed that tea overboard were Indians."

Don nodded and, turning to his aunt, said, "This is awfully good pie, Aunt Martha. Maybe there's another piece ——"

"Donald! Of course not!" Nevertheless, Aunt Martha went again to the kitchen cupboard.

CHAPTER II

DON FINDS A NEW FRIEND

During the next few days the destruction of the King's tea was the main topic of conversation in and round Boston. Moreover, bells were rung in celebration of the event, and some persons said frankly that they believed the act to be a stroke toward independence. David Hollis said so one day at the dinner-table.

When he had gone out Aunt Martha turned to her nephew. "Donald," she said, "your uncle is a good man, a brave man, and he is usually right; but, oh, I do hope that this time he is wrong. Do you realize what it will mean if the Colonies declare their independence of England?"

"It will mean fighting," Don replied.

"Yes, it will mean—war." Aunt Martha's voice trembled. "War between us and our own kinsmen with whom we have been close friends for so long."

Don thought of Tom Bullard, but he said nothing.

"I do hope that things will be settled peaceably before long," said his aunt.

Not many days had passed before the inhabitants of Boston learned that tea ships that had tried to land cargoes at New York and at Charleston had fared no better than the three Indiamen at Boston. And again the people of Boston rejoiced, for they were sure that they had done right in destroying the tea.

For a while Don found things very quiet at the little house in Pudding Lane. He went regularly to the Latin School in School Street and after hours frequently helped his aunt to look after the store. He saw Tom Bullard almost every day, but Tom had not a word to say to his former close friend.

One day shortly after Christmas the two boys met unexpectedly near Tom's house in Hanover Street. Don stopped short. "Say, Tom," he said, "don't you think we might be friends again even if we can't agree on all things?"

"I don't care to be friendly—with you," replied Tom shortly.

"Oh, all right, then," said Don.

For several minutes he was indignant and angry; then he decided that the best thing for

him to do would be to forget the quarrel, and from that moment he did not allow it to worry him.

The winter dragged on slowly. January passed, and February came and went. There had been plenty of sledding on the Common; and there were numerous ponds and swamps, where Don tried his new upturned skates that his Uncle David had given him on his birthday.

March was drawing to a close when Don unexpectedly found a new friend. It was Sunday evening, and Aunt Martha and Uncle David and Don were seated in front of a roaring fire on the hearth, when two loud knocks sounded at the door. Before Uncle David could get to his feet it swung open, and a short heavy-set man dressed in deerskin entered.

"Glen Drake!" exclaimed Uncle David. "By the stars, what in the world brings you out of the woods?"

"Oh, I just meandered down," replied the other, clasping the outstretched hand. "Thought maybe you'd be glad to see me."

"Glad? I surely am! Here—you know Aunt Martha." Glen Drake shook hands with

Don's aunt. "And here—this is my nephew Donald."

Don felt the bones in his hand fairly grate as the man pressed it.

"Draw up a chair, Glen," said Uncle David.

But Glen Drake had crossed to the door and slipped outside. In a moment he was back, carrying a large bundle in both arms. "A little present for Aunt Martha," he said and dropped it on the floor in the centre of the room. "There's a silver fox among 'em."

"Furs!" cried Don.

"Why, Glen Drake," began Aunt Martha, "you don't mean to say ——"

"Best year I ever had," said Glen and, kneeling, cut the thong that bound the bundle.

Don's eyes seemed fairly to be popping from his head as he watched the old trapper lift pelt after pelt from the closely-packed pile. There must have easily been several thousand dollars' worth there on the floor. Perhaps one-fourth of the pelts were muskrat; the rest were beaver, otter, mink, martin, sable, ermine and finally the trapper's greatest prize—a silver fox.

"You don't mean to say ——" Aunt Martha

began again. "Why, you surely don't intend to give me all these!"

At that the old trapper threw back his head and laughed for fully half a minute. "All!" he exclaimed. "Why, bless your heart, Aunt Martha, you should have seen the catch I made. This isn't one-fifth—no, not one-tenth!"

He seated himself in front of the fire and began to fill his pipe. "Never saw so much fur in my life," he said.

"Where have you been?" Uncle David asked.

"Up Quebec way and beyond."

While the two men were talking, Don not only listened eagerly, but studied the visitor closely. He was a short man with broad sloping shoulders and a pair of long heavy arms. His musket, which he had carried in when he went to get the furs, lay beside his coonskin cap on the floor. Though the weapon lay several feet from him, Don was sure that the man could get it in a fraction of a second, if he needed it badly; for he had crossed the floor with the quick noiseless tread of a cat. Now he was lying back in his chair, and his deep-set black eyes seemed to sparkle and burn in the moving light of the fire. His face was like dark tanned leather drawn over high

cheek bones; his hair was long and jet black. His pipe seemed twice the size of Uncle David's when it was in his mouth, but when the trapper's sinewy hand closed over the bowl it seemed very small. Glen Drake was just the sort of man to catch a boy's fancy.

All evening Don sat enthralled, listening to the stories the man told of the north, and Aunt Martha had to use all her power of persuasion to send her nephew off to bed. "No more pie for a week, Donald, unless you go this instant," she said at last.

"You like pie, Don?" asked the trapper. "Well, so do I. And I like boys also, and since I hope to be here for some little time maybe you and I can get to be real friendly."

"I—I surely hope so!" said Don and turned reluctantly toward the stairs.

He did not go to sleep at once; his room was directly above the sitting-room, and he could hear his uncle and Glen Drake talking until late into the night.

The month that followed was a delightful one for Don. After school hours he and the old trapper would often cross the Neck and go for a long walk through Cambridge and far beyond.

The backbone of winter was broken; spring was well along, and the birds had returned from the south. Glen knew them all, by sight and by sound, and he was willing and even eager to teach his companion; he taught him also the habits of the fur-bearing animals and the best ways to trap them; he taught him how to fish the streams, the baits to use and the various outdoor methods of cooking the fish they landed.

"I declare," said Glen one evening in May when they were returning with a fine mess of fish, "you're the quickest boy to learn a thing ever I knew. I'm as proud of ye as if you were my own son."

Don felt a thrill pass over him; he had not expected such praise as that. "I hope I can learn a lot more," he said.

But that was the last trip the two made into the country together for a long time. On arriving at the house in Pudding Lane, they found Uncle David pacing nervously back and forth across the floor.

"What's the matter, Dave?" asked Glen.

"Matter enough; haven't you heard?" Uncle David paused. Then he said with a note of anger in his voice: "I was sure all along that

the King would take some means of revenge for the affair of the tea, but it's worse than I'd suspected. He's going to close the port."

Glen Drake whistled softly. Don paused at the foot of the stairs.

"Military governor is coming first," continued Uncle David, "and troops later—Redcoats!"

"That won't help the town," said the trapper.

"You're right; and it won't help me; I've got a good supply of merchandise in the cellar—cloth mostly and a little powder. Bought it last week from the captain of the *Sea Breeze* and offered it right off to a friend of mine in Carolina, but can't send it till I hear from him and know whether he wants it. By that time, though, I'm afraid there won't be any ships sailing."

"Sell it here in town," suggested Glen.

"Can't do it; my offer was as good as a promise."

"Send it overland, then, though that would be more expensive, wouldn't it?"

"Yes, it would be; there wouldn't be any profit left."

But during the stress of the next few days Uncle David quite forgot about his merchandise. Captain-General Thomas Gage had arrived in a

ship from England; and on the seventeenth of May he landed at Long Wharf and as military governor was received with ceremony. On the first of June, amid the tolling of bells and fasting and prayer on the part of most of the good people of Boston, the Port Bill went into effect. A few days later Governor Hutchinson sailed for England.

Uncle David was moody and preoccupied. He and Glen spent much of their time in the North End, and Don could not help wondering what they were doing there. He and the trapper had become such close friends that he missed his old companion greatly. "Where do they go every evening?" he asked his aunt.

"You must not ask too many questions, Donald," Aunt Martha replied.

"Well," said Don, "how long will the port be closed?"

"I don't know. All I can say is that it is a wicked measure; I declare it is!"

Aunt Martha's words soon proved to be only too true. Hundreds of vessels, prevented from sailing by the British fleet, lay idle at the wharfs. Hundreds of persons walked the streets, out of work; and many of the very poor people were

without bread. Day by day the town seemed to grow a little more miserable. And still Aunt Martha hoped that there would be a peaceful settlement between the Colonies and the mother country. Uncle David and Glen Drake said very little except when they thought they were quite alone.

Don went frequently to the Common, where Redcoats were encamped; in the course of the summer the number of them increased. Barracks had been erected, and cannon had been placed at various points of vantage. It looked as if the British were preparing for a long stay.

Once Don overheard a conversation between two of the soldiers that made his blood boil. He was waiting for a school chum near the Province House, which General Gage was occupying as headquarters, when two Redcoats turned the corner at Rawson's Lane and stopped near him. "We'll teach these people how to behave in the future," said one.

"It's pretty hard for them," remarked the other, "having all their trade cut off and having a lot of their liberties taken from them."

"Hard!" exclaimed the first speaker. "It's meant to be hard. Everything is done purposely

to vex them. They talk of liberty; we'll show 'em what liberty means. Maybe when they feel the pinch of starvation they'll come to understand. Maybe they'll need powder and ball to make them behave, but they'll behave in the end!"

Don turned away, and from that moment he hoped that a time would come when the people of the Colonies would rise and drive the hated soldiers from the town. If he were only a little older! If he could only do something!

That evening when he returned to Pudding Lane he found the table set for only two persons. "Why, Aunt Martha," he said, "where are Uncle Dave and Glen?"

"They've gone on a trip southward. They won't return for perhaps a week or two."

"Oh," said Don, "did they go to see about the consignment of goods in the cellar?"

"They could see about that," Aunt Martha replied slowly.

As a matter of fact, the two men had gone on a special trip to New York. For some time they, together with such men as Paul Revere, a silversmith in the North End, William Dawes and others had been meeting in secret at the Green

Dragon Tavern; they were part of the Committee of Correspondence, and their object was to watch the British, learn all they could about them —where they kept their guns and powder, how many there were of them at various points—and to convey the information to the other Colonies. Uncle David had ceased work at the rope yard, and if Aunt Martha had known all the details of his doings at the Green Dragon she might have worried even more than she did. His mission now was, among other matters, to inform the Committee of Correspondence at New York of the arrival of a fresh regiment of Redcoats.

CHAPTER III

A REDCOAT GETS WET

In the absence of Glen Drake, Don had formed the habit of going down to the wharves and watching the great ships that lay in forced idleness. The boys that he knew were divided sharply between Whigs and Tories, though most of them were Whigs like himself. So far he had found no one with whom he could be as intimate as he had been with Tom Bullard; so he spent much of his time alone.

On the first day of September, Don was on his way to the water-front when he observed an excited group of sailors and townsmen on the opposite side of the street; they were talking loudly and making violent gestures with their hands. He crossed just in time to hear one of the sailors say: "I was down at Long Wharf and saw them go early this morning—more than two hundred Redcoats in thirteen boats!"

"And they went to Winter Hill," exclaimed another, "broke open the powder house and carried off two hundred and fifty half-barrels!

And a second detachment went to Cambridge and brought back two field-pieces that belong to the militia. Thieving Redcoats! It's high time Congress took some measures to oust 'em!"

"Have patience, Jim," said a third. "Our time will come, see if it doesn't."

"Patience! We've shown too much of it already."

Before Don reached home the news of the raids had spread all over town. People were discussing it on the street corners and in public meeting, and many persons were of a mind to organize at once and recapture as much of the stores as possible.

The Powder Alarm, as it was called, spread rapidly. Messengers from the Committees of Correspondence carried the news to the other Colonies, and the whole country soon blazed with indignation; as a result Lieutenant Governor Oliver and other important officers of the Crown were forced to resign. General Gage began at once to fortify Boston Neck, and then the flame of indignation blazed brighter.

In the midst of the excitement Uncle David and Glen Drake returned with the information that all the people of the other Colonies had "all

their eyes turned on Boston." "We'll have to open hostilities before long," Don's uncle declared. "Human nature can bear just so much—then look out!"

"O David!" cried Aunt Martha. "You seem to be anxious for bloodshed. You do indeed!"

"I'm anxious for justice," replied Uncle David.

"Ye can torment a critter just so far, Aunt Martha," said Glen; "then it'll turn and fight. I don't care what it is—mink, otter or even a poor little muskrat. And when it does fight it fights like fury. It's not only human nature, but the nature of every living critter."

Aunt Martha was silent, and Don, observing the old trapper's powerful fingers as he tightened the lacing in one of his boots, secretly wished that he were old enough to carry a musket in one of the companies of militia.

Two days later the two men were off on separate missions to the west and south, and again Don was left alone with his aunt.

One Saturday afternoon late in September he took a long walk with his dog, a young terrier that a sailor on one of the ships at Woodman's

Wharf had given him in exchange for three cakes of maple sugar and a set of dominoes. Up past the Faneuil Hall the two went, past the Green Dragon Tavern and along to the shipyard at Hudson's Point, the dog tugging eagerly at his leash, and Don holding him back.

For a while Don stood in Lynn Street, looking across the water at Charlestown and enjoying the cold wind that was sweeping in from the east. So far he had not found a name for the dog, and he was walking along thoughtfully when he caught sight of a red-coated figure standing at the approach to Ruck's Wharf and talking with—why, it was Tom Bullard! Don stopped short and then turned to watch the tide, which was sweeping round the point. What was Tom doing, talking with a Redcoat? On second thought Don realized that Tories and Redcoats had only too much in common these days. He was on the point of resuming his walk when he heard someone shout at the end of the wharf, and, turning, he saw a man in a small sloop holding something upraised in his hand. Tom and the soldier started toward the sloop, laughing. Then Don observed that it was a bottle that the man in the boat was holding. "Tom's found bad company,

I'm afraid," he thought and again resumed his walk.

On coming opposite the end of the wharf, he observed that Tom had gone aboard the sloop; he had crossed on a narrow plank stretched between the boat and the dock. The soldier, a tall, well-built fellow, had started across at a swinging gait. He had passed the middle and was only a few feet from the sloop when, apparently, the narrow plank tilted sidewise. "Look out!" Don heard Tom shout.

The soldier threw out both arms, balanced uncertainly for several seconds, took two short quick steps and then slipped. Don saw the man's hat fly off and go sailing in the wind. The next instant the soldier struck the water with a tremendous splash.

Tom Bullard stood with open mouth, looking down at the black water that had closed over the head of the soldier. The man with the bottle ran to get a rope, but by the time he reached the gunwale again the soldier reappeared a dozen yards from the bow, uttered a gurgling shout and sank even as the man on board made his cast.

Don's fingers had tightened round the leash; his eyes were wide, and his breath came quickly.

Then, letting go the leash, he ran to the edge of the wharf. He paused and in two swift movements tore off his jacket; then he felt a stab of doubt. What was he thinking of? Save a Redcoat! He thought of his uncle and of Glen Drake; he thought of all the wrongs the town was suffering at the hands of the King's soldiers—their insolent conduct on the streets, their hatred of the townsfolk. Then he thought of his aunt. That thought settled it. As the tide swept the man to the surface for the third time, Don jumped.

The water was like ice. He strangled as a wave struck him in the face just as his head came to the surface. He caught a glimpse of a dark red mass of cloth a dozen yards at his left; it seemed rapidly to be taking on the color of the water round it. Kicking with all his might, he struck out toward it, swinging his arms with short, quick strokes. Everything was confusion —air, sky, water. A great weight seemed to be pressing against his chest. Then one foot struck something hard. In an instant he had turned and plunged downward. All was water now, black, cold and sinister. His fingers closed on something soft—it might be seaweed. He struggled

upward. His lungs seemed on the point of bursting. Upward, upward—then a rush of air and light. A bundle of sodden red cloth came up beside him.

"Grab the wharf!" someone shouted.

But Don did not hear. He took a stroke with his free hand, and at that moment a length of heavy rope whipped down across his arm. Seizing it, he held on. Then he saw that the tide had carried him and his burden against the piling of the next wharf.

"Hold him a moment longer," said a voice, and then three red-faced sailors lowered themselves like monkeys, and two of them lifted the soldier out of the water. The third caught Don by the back of his shirt and pulled him upward.

On the splintery planks of the wharf, Don blinked his eyes and looked about him. A group of men were carrying the Redcoat into a warehouse.

"How do you feel, my lad?" asked the sailor who had pulled Don from the water.

"C-C-Cold."

"That's right, stand up. You did a plucky thing. Too bad the fellow was a Redcoat."

"Is—is he alive?"

"Oh, yes; he'll stand parade to-morrow all right. I'm sorry for that. How I hate 'em!"

Don caught a glimpse of Tom Bullard entering the warehouse. Then a low, plaintive cry sounded behind him, and, looking over the edge of the wharf, he saw his terrier in the water. "My pup!" exclaimed Don. "Get him somebody, please!"

A good-sized group of persons had gathered round the boy by that time, and the sailor and two other men hastened to rescue the dog. Once on the wharf, the terrier ran to his young master and began to leap up on him.

"Get the boy to a warm place," said a lanky fisherman and grasped Don by one arm.

The sailor who had pulled him from the water placed himself on the other side, and together the three of them started down the street at a rapid pace. Soon Don felt a warm glow all over his body; nevertheless his teeth were chattering, and with each puff of strong wind he shivered.

"Wish it had been old Gage instead of a common Redcoat," the sailor was saying.

"Same here," replied his companion. "You'd have pushed him under when you pulled the lad out, wouldn't you, Hank?"

"You're right, I would have done just that."

Down one street and into another the three hurried and then paused in front of a tavern with a swinging sign-board that bore the grotesque figure of a green dragon. "Here's Revere's place," said the sailor. "In we go."

Don soon found himself seated in front of a blazing wood-fire in a large room. It was the first time he had ever entered the Green Dragon Tavern. He glanced round the low-ceilinged room—at the long table, at the rows of pewter on the walls, at the dozen or more chairs with shiny rounded backs. Then he moved as close to the fire as he could with safety, and soon steam was rising from his shoes and stockings. The dog curled up on the hearth and blinked now at the boy, now at the blazing logs.

Hank left the room and returned a few minutes later with a bowl of broth and a cup of strong tea. "You needn't be afraid of this tea, my lad," he said and grinned. "Nobody's paid a tax on it." He winked at the fisherman. "See if you can find some dry clothes about the place, John."

Don finished the broth and was sipping the hot

tea when a big, rugged-faced man strode into the room, and Don recognized Paul Revere.

"This is the boy," said John.

"H'm," said Revere. "David Hollis's nephew, aren't you?"

"Yes, sir," replied Don.

"They tell me you saved a Redcoat."

"I did, sir," replied Don. "He couldn't swim."

"What'll your uncle say to that?" The man smiled.

"I'm sure I don't know." Indeed the question had occurred to Don several times before. What would Glen Drake say? Don felt his face grow hot; he thought he ought to say something more. "I—wouldn't pick a Redcoat to save—if I had my choice," he added.

Revere laughed heartily. "No, I don't believe you would," he said. "Well, I'll have some clothes for you in a trice. Put 'em on in the other room; you can return 'em to-morrow or next day."

Half an hour later Don said good-bye to Hank and John and set forth toward the house in Pudding Lane. Twilight was coming on, but Don was not sorry for that. He thought of the

miserable figure that he must present to passers-by. The coat he wore was several sizes too large for him; he had turned up the sleeves three times, and still they reached to his knuckles. The trousers were so big that he felt as if he were walking in a burlap bag. The hat, which was his own, was wet and misshapen. And at his heels trotted a wet, shivering terrier; no leash was necessary now.

What would his aunt say? And then he happened to remember that the day was Saturday. "Why, I declare," he said to himself. "Uncle Dave and Glen are expected home to-night."

He quickened his steps as he crossed the cobblestones on King Street. He was thinking of just how he should begin his story, but suddenly in the midst of his thoughts he stopped and looked at the pup. "I believe I've found a name for you!" he said.

The pup wagged his tail.

"I can't call you Redcoat or soldier, but since it was a sailor I got you of, and a sailor that pulled both of us out of the water, I'm going to call you—Sailor!"

The pup's tail wagged more vigorously, as if he were content with the name.

Don reached his aunt's house; there was a light in the store; he entered and passed through to the sitting-room. Uncle David and Glen evidently had been home for some little while, for they were both seated comfortably beside a candle, reading the *Massachusetts Spy* and the *Boston Gazette.* They looked up as Don entered, and Aunt Martha, who had just come from the kitchen, dropped a plateful of doughnuts and gave a little cry.

"Where you been, Don, to get such clothes as those?" asked Glen.

"Donald Alden, I couldn't believe it was you," said Aunt Martha. "How you frightened me!"

"Scarecrow come to town," said David Hollis.

Don helped to pick up the doughnuts, adding as he held the last one, "This one's dirty, Aunt Martha; I'll eat it." Then he told what had happened to him on his afternoon walk, and Uncle David's face glowed while he listened, though Don could not tell whether it was with satisfaction or with anger. "Did I do what was right, Uncle Dave?" he asked when he had concluded the narrative.

David Hollis did not reply at once, but Aunt Martha said quickly, "You did, Donald; but,

my dear boy, what a risk you took! Don't ever do such a thing again—that is," she hastened to add, "don't do it unless you have to." The good lady seemed to be having a hard time adjusting her spectacles.

"Yes," said Uncle David at last, "your Aunt Martha is right, Don." He laughed and added, "You did right, but don't do it again unless you have to."

Glen Drake nodded and bent over the *Gazette*.

CHAPTER IV

A TRIP TO CONCORD

THE next day was Sunday, a bleak, damp day that most of the good people of Boston were content to spend indoors. Snow was falling in large wet flakes that melted almost as soon as they struck the sidewalks. The great elms on the Common tossed their gaunt black branches in the wind; and on the water-front the flakes of snow whirled downward among the spars of the idle shipping and vanished into the black water.

In Pudding Lane, Aunt Martha and the two men had finished dinner, and Don was munching his fourth doughnut, when a knock sounded at the door. "Now who can that be?" asked Don's aunt.

Uncle David opened the door and disclosed a tall, well-built man in the bright uniform of a British soldier. "Good day to you, sir," said the Redcoat and took off his hat.

"Good day to you." David Hollis's tone was by no means hospitable.

"You have a boy—a boy who is called Donald—Donald Alden, I think."

Uncle David nodded. "Be so kind as to step inside. The day is bleak."

The soldier crossed the threshold, and David Hollis closed the door and stood stiffly with his hand on the latch. Glen Drake had stopped in the act of filling his pipe. Aunt Martha's lips were pursed, and her eyes were wide open. For a moment or two no one spoke. Then the soldier looked at Don, who had hastily swallowed the last of the doughnut. "This boy," he said, "saved my life yesterday. I should be a most ungrateful man if I allowed the act to pass without a word. Be sure that I am grateful. Harry Hawkins is my name, private in His Majesty's 43rd Regiment. If I can be of any service to you, Master Donald," he added with a smile, "I shall be indebted to you until I have performed it."

"Thank you, sir," Don replied. "I had no hope of reward when I plunged from the dock."

The man smiled faintly and turned as if to go.

"You and your fellows might act with a little more consideration for folks who wish only to be left alone in justice," said Uncle David.

"I am a soldier; I obey my King," the man replied and stepped to the door. "I wish you all good day."

David Hollis closed the door behind him.

"I like that fellow for three things," said Glen Drake abruptly. "He's grateful to Don here, as he should be; he didn't offer the lad money for saving his life; and he said what he had to say and then made tracks."

Aunt Martha nodded and sighed, but Uncle David kept a stubborn silence.

As for Don, he admitted afterward to his aunt that he liked the looks of Harry Hawkins better than he liked the looks of any Redcoat he had ever seen, and that he was really glad that he had been able to save the man's life. "I like him far better than I like a Tory," he added with considerable spirit.

Indeed a good many people were far more bitter against the Tories than they were against the Redcoats, who after all had behaved pretty well under somewhat trying conditions. By now, the middle of November, there were eleven regiments of Redcoats, most of which were grouped on and round the Common; there was also artillery; and the following month five hun-

dred marines landed from the *Asia*. Earl Percy was in command of the army, and a formidable looking force it was, on parade.

But the Colonies also had an army. Uncle David and Glen Drake, on returning from their frequent journeys, brought much news of what was happening outside the town. The conviction was fast becoming general that force and force alone could settle the whole matter; and to that end Alarm List Companies of Minute-Men were being formed in the various towns, and supplies and ammunition were being collected and stored for future use. "By Hector," Glen remarked on one occasion, "right out here in Danvers the deacon of the parish is captain of the Minute-Men, and the minister is his lieutenant! Donald, if you were only a mite older—but then again maybe it's best that you're not."

By the first of the new year the force of Redcoats in Boston had increased to approximately thirty-five hundred; and, moreover, General Timothy Ruggles, the leader of the Tories, was doing his best to aid the soldiers in every possible way. Tom Bullard, it seems, was acting as a kind of aide to the general and had accompanied

him several times on missions to the Tory town of Marshfield.

"I tell you, Don," said Glen one day, "watching this trouble is a whole lot like watching a forest fire. It started with only a few sparks, like the Stamp Act, you might say; now it's burning faster and faster every minute. It won't be long before it blazes up bright, and then it'll have to burn itself out."

"How soon is it likely to blaze up?"

"Mighty soon, I'm a-thinking."

Glen's estimate was correct. In March the people of Boston saw a marked change in the behavior of the troops. On the fifth of the month, which was the anniversary of the Boston Massacre, the address that Dr. Warren made was hissed by perhaps twoscore of officers who had attended the Old South just for that purpose. And on the sixteenth, a day of fasting and prayer, soldiers of the King's Own Regiment acted in a way that filled Aunt Martha with indignation.

She and Don had gone to church early. Shortly before the service began, old Mrs. Lancaster, who lived across the way in Pudding Lane, came in and remarked that soldiers were

pitching their tents outside. A few minutes later, in the midst of the service, the sounds of fife and drum came from the street. The minister stopped his sermon and looked round him.

Aunt Martha bit her lips, and two bright pink spots showed on her cheeks. "This is scandalous!" she exclaimed.

"It's downright wicked!" said old Mrs. Lancaster.

The minister went on with the service, raising his voice to make himself heard; but Don, and doubtless many others, had little thought for what was being said inside the church.

At the end of the service many of the people hurried past the soldiers on their way home; but others stood and watched with indignant glances.

That event was only one of many other irritations that followed and inflamed the hearts of the townsfolk.

"Aunt Martha, war has got to come," said Don.

"Don't speak of it, Donald," she replied, and Don glanced once at his aunt's face and wished that he had held his tongue in the first place; his aunt's eyes were red and moist.

" All that cloth and powder is still in the cellar, isn't it? " he asked a while later.

" Yes, Donald; and your uncle intends to keep it there until he can find a satisfactory way of getting it out, though what with all the trouble that surrounds us, I do believe that he doesn't often give it a thought any more."

" Seems too bad not to sell it," said Don.

" Yes, I've said so myself, but he always nods and says, ' Yes, that's right,' and then his mind goes wandering off on—on other matters."

David Hollis, and indeed all the members of the Committees of Correspondence, had many matters to keep them busy. A close watch was being kept on the troops in town. It was known that Gage had sent two officers in disguise to make maps of the roads that led to Boston; and rumor had it that he intended to send a strong force to Concord to capture supplies that the patriots had stored there.

The month of March dragged past with war-like preparations on both sides. Many of the townsfolk, realizing that open hostilities must begin soon, had moved into the country. Samuel Adams and John Hancock had gone to Lexington, where they were staying with the Rev. Jonas

Clark. David Hollis and Glen Drake had both made several trips to the town with messages for them.

One day early in April, David Hollis took his wife aside out of hearing of his nephew. "Martha," he said in a low voice, "I want you to leave the house for a while. There's going to be trouble, and Boston will be no safe place for you."

Aunt Martha's chin lifted a trifle. "And, pray, where should I go?" she asked.

"To Cousin Deborah's in Concord."

"I shall not go!" Aunt Martha replied.

"But she has already prepared for you; I told her you'd come."

"You had no right to say that."

"But, Martha, listen to reason. I say there will be trouble—I know it! And it's coming soon. Need I speak plainer than that?"

"No, David, you need not. I understand. Yet I intend to remain right here in our home."

David Hollis threw out his hands and turned away. Then with another gesture he said, "Martha Hollis, you are a foolish woman. I—I command you to go; it is for your own good."

Aunt Martha's blue eyes flashed behind her

spectacles. "And I refuse to obey. My place is here, and here is where I stay." Then with a sudden flash of anger she exclaimed, "I'd like to see any Redcoats drive me from my own home!"

David Hollis turned toward the fire and snapped his fingers several times. "It's too bad," he said. "Stubbornness is not a virtue."

"You have it!"

Uncle David made no reply.

"You tell Cousin Deborah that I'm sorry she has gone to any trouble about me."

"I don't expect to go that way very soon."

"Then Glen can see her."

"Glen has gone—elsewhere."

Aunt Martha was thoughtful. "Well," she said at last, "as you say, it is too bad, but, David, my mind is made up."

"How would it be to send Donald? Seems to me it might be a good vacation for him. He's an able lad, and I know that he'd be glad to make the trip. He could ride almost as far as Lexington with Harry Henderson. Cousin Deborah would be glad to have him for overnight."

"Dear me!" said Aunt Martha. "I can't allow it."

But in the end she yielded, and that evening Don heard the news with glee. "Your cousin is a nervous, exact kind of person," his aunt told him, "and I want you to tell her everything that I say."

"But what is it?" asked Don.

"Tell her that I am very sorry she has gone to any trouble on my account, but that I cannot with a clear conscience visit with her at this time. Say also that when your uncle promised for me he had not consulted me and therefore did not know all the facts."

"She'll want to know the facts," said Don, grinning. "I'm kind of curious myself, Aunt Martha."

"Donald!"

But Don's grin was irresistible, and his aunt smiled. "Never mind," she said. "And you'll hurry home, won't you?"

"I surely will, Aunt Martha."

The next morning, the sixteenth of April, Don set out with Harry Henderson, a raw-boned young fellow with red hair and a short growth of red stubble on his face. The soldiers had just finished standing parade on the Common when Don and Harry rattled by in the cart; Harry's

light blue eyes narrowed as he watched them moving in little groups to their barracks.

"Good morning to you, young sir," said a cheerful voice.

Don, looking up, saw Harry Hawkins. "Good morning to you, sir," he replied.

Harry Henderson looked at his companion narrowly. "Friend of yours?" he asked.

"Well, no, not exactly," replied the boy.

"Friend of your uncle's maybe?" Harry was grinning impudently now, and Don's cheeks were red.

"No; here's how it is——" And Don gave a brief account of how he had happened to meet the Redcoat.

"Well," said Harry dryly, "I should think he might say good morning to you."

They passed the Common and finally turned into Orange Street and, after some delay, drove past the fortifications on the Neck. "Clear of 'em b'gosh!" said Harry, cracking his whip. "We'll reach Lexin'ton by mid-afternoon if old Dan here doesn't bust a leg."

But Harry had not reckoned on horseshoes. Shortly before they reached Medford, old Dan lost a shoe, and the circumstance caused a delay

of two hours. Then later Dan shied at a barking dog and snapped one of the shafts. As a result Harry and Don did not reach Lexington until almost ten o'clock.

"You've got to stay right here with me," said Harry. "It's too late for you to reach Concord. I know your cousin, and she wouldn't be at all pleased to have you wake her at midnight—not she!" He laughed.

So Don remained at Lexington overnight and the next morning set out on foot for Concord. He reached his cousin's house just before noon.

Cousin Deborah was a tall strong-looking woman with black hair, black eyes and a nose that was overly large. She had once been a school teacher and, as David Hollis used to say, had never lost the look. "Where's your Aunt Martha?" were her first words to Don.

"She decided she couldn't come."

"But Uncle David told me ——"

Then followed the inevitable questions that a person like Cousin Deborah would be sure to ask, and Don wriggled under each of them. But after all, Cousin Deborah was good-hearted, and deep within her she knew that she would have done the same as Don's aunt was doing, if she

had been in similar circumstances—though she would not acknowledge it now. "Your aunt always did have a broad streak of will," she said severely. "Now I want you to spend several days with me, Donald."

"Aunt Martha told me to hurry back."

"That means you can stay to-night and to-morrow night," Cousin Deborah decided. "I'll have dinner in a few moments, and then I want you to tell me all the things that have happened in Boston."

In spite of his cousin's questions, which were many and varied, Don managed to enjoy himself while he was at Concord. On the second day he met a boy of his own age, and the two fished all morning from the North Bridge. In the afternoon they went on a long tramp into the woods along the stream.

At night Don was tired out and was glad when his cousin finally snuffed the candles and led the way up-stairs. He was asleep shortly after his head struck the pillow.

That night proved to be one of the most eventful in the history of the Colonies.

CHAPTER V

THE REGULARS COME OUT

WHILE Don was asleep, breathing the damp, fragrant air that blew over the rolling hills and fields round Concord, his friend, Paul Revere, was being rowed cautiously from the vicinity of Hudson's Point toward Charlestown. It was then near half-past ten o'clock.

Revere, muffled in a long cloak, sat in the stern of the small boat and glanced now at his two companions—Thomas Richardson and Joshua Bentley—and now at the British man-of-war, *Somerset,* only a few rods off. The tide was at young flood, and the moon was rising. The night seemed all black and silver—black shadows ahead where the town of Charlestown lay, black shadows behind that shrouded the wharfs and shipyards of the North End, and silver shimmering splashes on the uneasy water and on the sleek spars of the *Somerset.*

The sound of talking came from the direction of the man-of-war and was followed by a burst of

laughter that reverberated musically in the cool night air. Revere blew on his hands to warm them. The little boat drew nearer, nearer to Charlestown; now he could see the vague outlines of wharfs and houses. Several times he glanced over his shoulder in the direction of a solitary yellow light that gleamed in the black-and-silver night high among the shadows on the Boston side,—a light that burned steadily in the belfry of the Old North Meeting-House behind Corps Hill as a signal that the British were on their way by land to attack the Colonists.

"Here we are," said one of the rowers, shipping his muffled oar and partly turning in his seat.

A few minutes later the boat swung against a wharf, and the two men at the oars held it steady while Revere stepped out. A brief word or two and he was on his way up the dock. In the town he soon met a group of patriots, one of whom, Richard Devens, got a horse for him. Revere lost no time in mounting and setting off to warn the countryside of the coming of the Redcoats.

He had not gone far beyond Charlestown Neck, however, when he almost rode into two

British officers who were waiting in the shadows beneath a tree. One of them rode out into the middle of the path; the other charged full at the American. Like a flash Revere turned his horse and galloped back toward the Neck and then pushed for the Medford road. The Redcoat, unfamiliar with the ground, had ridden into a clay pit, and before he could get his horse free Revere was safely out of his reach.

At Medford he roused the captain of the Minute-Men; and from there to Lexington he stopped at almost every house along the road and summoned the inmates from their beds. It was close to midnight when he reached Lexington. Riding to the house of the Rev. Jonas Clark, where Hancock and Adams were staying, he found eight men on guard in command of a sergeant.

"Don't make so much noise!" cried the fellow as Revere clattered up to the gate.

"Noise!" repeated Revere in a hoarse voice. "You'll have noise enough here before long—the regulars are coming out!"

At that moment a window opened, and Hancock thrust his head out. "Come in, Revere!" he said. "We're not afraid of *you!*"

Revere dismounted and hurried inside. In a few words he told his story, that the British were on their way either to capture Hancock and Adams or to destroy the military stores at Concord. While he was talking, William Dawes, who also had set out to warn the people, clattered up to the door.

After he and Revere had had something to eat and to drink they started for Concord and were joined by a Dr. Prescott, whom Don had seen once or twice in company with his uncle. With Revere in the lead the party rode on at a rapid pace.

About half-way to Concord, while Prescott and Dawes were rousing the people in a house near the road, Revere spied two horsemen ahead. Turning in his saddle, he shouted to his companions, and at that moment two more horsemen appeared.

Prescott came riding forward in answer to the shout, and he and Revere tried to get past the men, all of whom were British officers. But the four of them were armed, and they forced the Americans into a pasture. Prescott at once urged his horse into a gallop, jumped a stone wall and, riding in headlong flight, was soon safe

on his way to Concord. Revere urged his horse toward a near-by wood, but just before he reached it six British officers rode out, and he was a prisoner.

"Are you an express?" demanded one of them.

"Yes," replied Revere and with a smile added: "Gentlemen, you have missed your aim. I left Boston after your troops had landed at Lechemere Point, and if I had not been certain that the people, to the distance of fifty miles into the country, had been notified of your movements I would have risked one shot before you should have taken me."

For a moment no one spoke; it was clear that the Redcoats were taken aback. Then followed more questions, all of which Revere answered truthfully and without hesitating. Finally they ordered their prisoner to mount, and all rode slowly toward Lexington. They were not far from the meeting-house when the crash of musketry shook the night air.

For an instant the major who was in command of the party thought they had been fired on. Then he remarked to the officer beside him, "It's the militia."

The officer laughed shortly and glanced at their prisoner. Then the party halted, and the British took Revere's horse. The major asked him how far it was to Cambridge and, on being told, left the prisoner standing in the field and with the rest of the party rode toward the meeting-house.

A few minutes later Revere crossed the old burying-ground and entered the town. He soon found Hancock and Adams again and told them what had happened, and they concluded to take refuge in the town of Woburn. Revere went with them. He had done his duty.

Perhaps it was a vague feeling of impending danger, perhaps it was the mere twitter of a bird outside his window—at any rate Don awoke with a start. All was darkness in the room. A light, cool wind stirred the branches of the great elm at the side of the house; he could hear the twigs rubbing gently against the rough shingles. He had no idea what time it was; it must be after midnight, he thought; but somehow he was not sleepy. He raised his head a trifle. Downstairs a door slammed; that seemed strange. Now someone was talking. "I wonder ——" he said to himself and then sat bolt upright in bed.

The church bell had begun to ring at a furious rate. Clang, clang! Clang—clang! Don thought he had never before heard a bell ring so harshly or so unevenly. He jumped out of bed and began to dress. Clang! Clang! What in the world could be the matter? He could hear shouts now and the sound of hastening footsteps. In his excitement he got the wrong arm into his shirt. Clang! Clang—clang! He found his shoes at last and with trembling fingers got them on his feet. He unlatched the door and started carefully down the winding stairs. It seemed as if there were a hundred steps to those creaking old stairs. Twice he almost missed his footing—and all the while the bell continued to clash and ring and tremble.

In the sitting-room a single candle was burning. Don got a glimpse of his cousin Deborah, hastily dressed and still wearing her nightcap; she was standing at the door, and his Cousin Eben, with a musket in his hand and a powder horn over his shoulder, was saying good-bye. Don saw him kiss his wife. Then the door opened, the candle flickered, and he was gone.

"Cousin Deborah, what's wrong?" cried Don.

"The regulars are coming!" And then Cousin Deborah burst into tears.

Don bit his lips; he had never thought of his cousin as being capable of tears.

They did not last long. A few movements of her handkerchief and Cousin Deborah seemed like herself again. "Donald," she said, "they have begun it, and the good Lord is always on the side of the right. Now I want you to go back to bed and get your rest."

"Are you going back to bed, Cousin Deborah?"

"No; there will be no sleep for me this night."

"Then I shall remain up also," replied Don.

Cousin Deborah made no protest but went to the stove and poked the fire.

The bell had ceased ringing now. The town of Concord was wide awake.

While Don and his cousin were eating a hastily prepared breakfast the Minute-Men and the militia assembled on the parade ground near the meeting-house. Meanwhile other patriots were hard at work transporting the military stores to a place of safety.

Dawn was breaking, and the mist was rising from the river when Don and his cousin finally

got up from the table. "Now, Donald," said Cousin Deborah, "I've been thinking all along of your Aunt Martha and blaming myself for my selfishness in having you stay here with me for so long. I'd give most anything if you were back there with her. And yet——" She paused frowning.

"Oh, I can get back all right," said Don confidently.

"How?"

"Why, by keeping off the roads as much as possible. I know the country pretty well."

"You're a bright lad, Donald," said Cousin Deborah. "You're a bright lad; and I don't know but what you'd better start. Your aunt needs you more than I do. But oh, Donald, you'll be cautious!"

"I don't think I ought to leave you here alone."

"Drat the boy!" exclaimed his cousin and then smiled. "Bless you, Donald," she added, "I'll be safe enough. I shall go to Mrs. Barton's until things are quiet again. Now go and get yourself ready."

Don needed only a few moments in which to get his things together. Then he walked with

his cousin as far as Mrs. Barton's house, which was situated some distance beyond the North Bridge, bade her good-bye and started back. It was growing lighter every minute now, and the birds were singing in all the trees. On the road he met a Minute-Man who was hurrying in the opposite direction, and asked him the news.

"Regulars fired on our boys at Lexin'ton," replied the fellow as he hurried past. Over his shoulder he shouted, "Killed six of 'em—war's begun!"

Don said not a word in reply, but stood stock still in the road. For some reason a great lump had come into his throat, and he thought of his Aunt Martha. He must get to her as quickly as possible.

As he came near the North Bridge he saw the Provincial troops—the Minute-Men and the militia of the town and detachments of Minute-Men from some of the outlying towns; and all the while fresh soldiers were hurrying to swell the numbers. The British, he soon learned, were on their way to Concord, and several companies of Provincials had gone out to meet them.

Don left the town and struck off into the open country several hundred yards from the Lexing-

ton road. After a few minutes of rapid walking he saw the detachment of Americans coming back. He quickened his pace and finally broke into a run.

He had gone something more than a mile and a half when he suddenly stopped and threw himself on the ground. There on the road, marching steadily in the direction of Concord, was a large force of regulars. He could see the flash of metal and the bright red of their coats. For a while he lay there, panting. Then at last, spying a great rock with a hollow just behind it, he crept toward it and waited.

The long column advanced slowly. Now Don could hear the crunch of their feet on the hard road. He lifted his head cautiously and began to count; there must easily be a thousand Redcoats. The crunching grew louder as the head of the column came almost opposite to him. Now he could hear the rattle of equipment and the occasional jangling of a sword.

It was some time before the rear of the column had passed. He waited until it was perhaps a quarter of a mile up the road and then got to his feet. He ought not to have much trouble in reaching Boston if he started at once. He

He Lifted His Head Cautiously and Began to Count.

was about to resume his journey when a fresh thought came to him. Ought he to go without knowing what was to happen to the town of Concord—and to his Cousin Deborah? For at least five minutes he struggled with the question. "No, I oughtn't!" he declared at last and, turning suddenly, began to retrace his steps.

It was close to seven o'clock when the regulars, in two columns, marched into Concord and sent a party over the North Bridge into the country. Don found a clump of spruces growing on a hillside and climbed into the lower branches of one of them. From that position he could see the scattered houses and the two bridges, though the distance was too great for him to be able to distinguish features or even the outlines of anybody in the town.

Part of the King's force seemed to have disbanded, and later when Don heard the ring of axes he suspected that they were destroying the stores that had not been carried away. "Well," he thought, "they won't be able to destroy much."

But when he distinguished blue smoke curling upward from several places near the centre of the town he almost lost his grip on the branch to

which he was clinging. One of them was the court-house! Where was the militia? Where were the Minute-Men? He made out the peaked roof of his cousin's house and the great elm standing beside it, and observed with some satisfaction that no Redcoats were close to it. Then a while later he saw the thread of smoke above the court-house grow thinner, and at last it disappeared altogether.

Don held his position in the tree for more than an hour. He ground his teeth as he saw a detachment of soldiers leave the town and cut down the liberty pole on the side of the hill. Where were the Minute-Men and the militia?

The main body of the regulars was well inside the town. At the South Bridge there was a small party on guard, and at the North Bridge was another party of about one hundred. Don was so much occupied with watching the Redcoats that he had failed to observe a long double column of Provincials coming down the hill beyond the North Bridge; they were moving at a fast walk and carried their guns at the trail.

At first glance he thought there were no more than a hundred of them, but as he watched he was forced to conclude that there were at least three

hundred. He pulled himself farther out on the limb and waited.

The detachment of regulars, who were on the far side of the bridge, hastily retired across it and prepared for an attack. When the Provincials were a few rods distant the Redcoats opened fire, then waited and fired again, and Don saw two men fall. Then he saw a succession of bright flashes and heard the crash of arms as the Provincials returned the fire. Several of the enemy fell. Then there was more firing, and in a few minutes the British left the bridge and ran in great haste toward the main body, a detachment from which was on the way to meet them. The Provincials pursued the regulars over the bridge and then divided; one party climbed the hill to the east, and the other returned to the high grounds.

Don found himself trembling all over; he felt sick and dizzy. With much difficulty he reached the ground, where he lay for a few minutes. On getting to his feet, he saw the Redcoats who had first crossed the North Bridge returning. In the town there seemed to be much confusion; the sun glanced on red coats and polished trimmings as men hurried here and there.

Don would not trust himself to climb the tree again, but threw himself on the ground at the foot of it. He would rest for a while and then set out on his long journey back to Boston, fairly confident that his cousin had not been harmed. He had not slept a wink since some time between one and two o'clock in the morning; now it was after ten o'clock. So when his head began to nod he did not try very hard to fight off sleep.

CHAPTER VI

ACROSS THE FLATS

Don was wakened by the sound of firing. He sat up and rubbed his eyes; then, looking at the sun, he guessed that twelve o'clock had passed. He could see nothing of the Redcoats; nor could he see smoke anywhere inside the town. From the east came the sound of firing that had wakened him, and men with muskets were hurrying across fields in that direction. For a moment he thought of returning to his Cousin Deborah's; then he decided to push for Boston as fast as he could.

Half running, half walking, he made his way in a southeasterly direction in order to avoid the main road. Once he wondered whether the Redcoat Harry Hawkins was with this expedition of British troops, but somehow the thought was painful, and he turned his mind to other things.

For some time he had been climbing a rocky hillside; now, on reaching the crest, he got his last glimpse of the skirmish. The British were in the road just outside of Lexington, and, far

off as Don was, he could see plainly that they were having a hard time of it. He could see the flash of sabres as if the officers were urging their men to advance. One officer was prancing here and there on a spirited black horse, as if he had lost control of the animal. Then Don saw part of the King's troops open fire and saw a dozen or more muskets flash in reply along an old stone wall on the opposite side of the road. Before he heard the reports of them he saw the black horse fall. Another glance and he saw a company of Minute-Men crossing a distant field at a rapid pace. The sight of a battle going on almost under his nose, the sound of guns, the smell of powder, all seemed to hold him spell-bound, and only the thought of his Aunt Martha alone in the little house in Pudding Lane caused him to turn and hurry on his way.

Soon he was out of hearing of the firing, but from time to time he saw detachments of Minute-Men and militia marching to the east. Once he stopped at a solitary farmhouse and asked for something to eat. A woman who was alone except for a little girl of nine or ten years gave him bread and cheese and then prepared a small bundle of the food for him to take along.

Don told her what he had seen at Concord and at Lexington, and her lips quivered; but she smiled at him. "Such a day!" she exclaimed. "My husband and my three brothers have gone. It seems that all the men from the village have gone. I have heard that the town of Dedham is almost empty; even the company of gray-haired old veterans of the French Wars has gone. Such a day! Be careful, my boy, and return to your aunt as soon as possible."

Don thanked her for her kindness as he was leaving the house, and soon he was hurrying on his way toward Boston. From Glen Drake he had learned many of the secrets of woodcraft and had little trouble in making his way through the thickets in the vicinity of Fresh Pond. But mishaps will sometimes overtake the best of woodsmen. As Don was descending a slope on the western side of the pond he stepped on a loose stone, which turned under his weight and sent him crashing headlong to the bottom. He lay there with teeth set and both hands clenched; a sharp pain was throbbing and pounding in his right ankle. Little drops of perspiration stood out like beads on his forehead.

For several minutes he lay there; then as the

pain decreased in violence he sat up. But later when he rose he found that he dared not put any weight at all on his right foot. Here was a predicament! There was not a house in sight; he was a long way from the nearest road; and night was coming on.

He tried to climb the slope down which he had slid, but the effort only sent sharp pains shooting up his leg. Even when he crawled for only a dozen yards or so on his hands and knees the pain would force him to stop; it seemed that he could not move without giving the ankle a painful wrench. Several times he shouted for help, but he had little hope that anybody would be in that vicinity to hear him. So at last he dragged himself to a little cove that was overgrown with birches and willows; there he loosened his shoe and rubbed his swollen ankle.

"Well," he said to himself, "I've got to stay here all night, and I haven't a thing except my knife and ——" He interrupted himself with an exclamation; his knife was not in his pocket. Then he remembered that he had left it at his Cousin Deborah's.

The missing knife made his situation even more desperate than he had supposed it was. With

a knife he might have fashioned a bow such as he had once seen Glen Drake use for lighting a fire; as it was, he should have to keep warm as best he could.

The first thing he did was to choose a convenient hollow that was protected at the back by the hill and on the sides by birches and the willows. Then, breaking off a quantity of branches, he fashioned a rude but effective windbreak for the front. By the time he had finished doing that work it was twilight, and a cool wind was blowing across the pond.

Don opened the package of food that the good lady at the farmhouse had given him. There were bread and cheese and three small ginger cakes; and when he had eaten half the food and put the rest by till morning he felt a good deal better. Pulling his coat up round his neck, he snuggled down on the light branches with which he had carpeted the floor of his bower and prepared to wait for morning.

All light had faded from the sky, and the wind was rising steadily. Loose twigs all round him tapped incessantly against one another in tune with the wind. Don shivered and forgot the dull pain in his ankle.

Out in the pond and down close to the shore on both sides of the cove he could hear strange little splashes, and in the thickets behind him a pair of owls were calling every now and then. If it had not been for thoughts of Aunt Martha, Don might really have enjoyed his experience. He did not doubt that he should be able to walk in the morning, and he rather liked being out alone as Glen Drake had been many, many times.

Once he dozed off and awoke some time later, feeling cold and hungry. The twigs were tapping all about him; somewhere far to the south a hound was baying mournfully; and in front of him the moon had covered the pond with a silvery sheen.

Again Don dozed off, and then awoke with a violent start. Somebody—or something—was moving about in the underbrush on the slope above him. Then a stone rattled down and bounded into the water. Startled at the loud splash it made, Don gave an involuntary exclamation. An instant later he heard someone call his name.

"O Don!" the call was repeated.

Don sat up. "Who is it?" he shouted in reply.

"Yer safe and sound? Praise be for that!"

"Glen!" cried Don, pulling himself upward.

In a moment the old trapper was at the foot of the slope, and Don was explaining the accident that had befallen him.

"Well, yer a plucky lad," said Glen. "I tracked ye all the way from Concord, and when I found you was headin' fer Fresh Pond I began to have my fears. Here, now, let me take ye on my back, and we'll talk as we go along."

Don was a sturdy boy and unusually solid for his age, but Glen Drake lifted him to his back as if he had been no more than a child; Don could feel the muscles in the old trapper's shoulders play up and down as Glen climbed the slope easily and walked quite as well as if it had been daylight.

"What happened to the Redcoats, Glen?" asked Don.

"They got licked," Glen replied promptly. "They ran most all the way from Lexin'ton, and some of 'em fell and lay still with their tongues a-hanging out; they were that tired. They lost a lot of men, Don, and serves 'em right. Our boys kept a-coming from all directions—and most of 'em know how to shoot too! I tell you, if a

second force of the King's men hadn't come out, not one of the Redcoats that tried to burn Concord would have got back alive. Now they're sewed up tight in Boston; we've got an army watchin' the town, and it's growing every minute."

"How's Aunt Martha, and how am I ever going to get back to her?"

"Your Aunt Martha is all right—at least, she was the last I saw her. As to how you're a-goin' to get back, I can't say for certain. But I'll get you back somehow; you trust me for that."

"Where's Uncle David?"

"He's at Cambridge with the army. I'm sort of with the army myself, though I don't guess I'll ever do much drillin'." Glen Drake chuckled. "Morning's a-coming, Don; morning's a-coming, and we're at war!"

Don thought of his Aunt Martha, alone in Pudding Lane.

All the while Glen had been tramping with long strides in the direction of the main part of Cambridge. Only once did he pause, and then it was to fill his pipe. At last he turned into a lane at the right of the road and approached a

small house that overlooked the river. By that time dawn was well on the way.

Don observed two or three soldiers at the side of the house; they were cooking bacon over a small fire. "Hi, there!" shouted one. "I see you found your boy."

"Yes, I found him," replied Glen. "Where's Dave Hollis?"

"He hasn't come in yet."

Glen carried Don into the house, spoke a few words to a woman who was preparing the morning meal and then, at her bidding, climbed the stairs.

By the time the rays of the sun were slanting down on the river Don was asleep deep within the feathery softness of a huge four-posted bed. The woman down-stairs had given him a delicious breakfast, and after he had eaten it the old trapper had rubbed his injured ankle with some potent, vile-smelling ointment that he said would cure anything from rheumatism to nose-bleed.

Near the middle of the afternoon Don awoke and a little to his astonishment saw his Uncle David sitting beside Glen at one side of the bed. "Uncle Dave!" he cried.

In a moment David Hollis had clasped his nephew's hands in his own. "You've had a hard time, Donald, my boy," he said. "How do you feel?"

"All right, except for my ankle; I gave it a bad twist when I fell."

"Yes; Glen has told me. I hope you'll be able to walk soon." David Hollis looked at his nephew anxiously.

"In two or three days maybe," said the trapper.

Don groaned. "Not until then?" he asked. "Meanwhile Aunt Martha is all alone."

"Yes, and she needs you, Donald." David Hollis was plainly worried. "The worst of it is," he continued, "that the King's soldiers have fortified the Neck and are mighty watchful. There's no way of getting in or out."

"You're wrong there," said Glen. "The back harbor's dry at low water, you know."

David Hollis looked doubtful. "It'd be too great a risk to try and cross that way," he said. "If anything should happen, I'd never forgive myself."

"Now, listen here," said Glen; "I promised the boy I'd get him back, and, by thunder, I'm a

man of my word. A dark night, a little fog, and nothing's easier."

Don's uncle said nothing for several minutes. At last he grasped the old trapper's hand. "Glen," he said, "I've never yet known you to fail in an undertaking. May you succeed in this. I see no other way."

The next day was Friday, and thanks to the trapper's ointment Don was able to walk a very little. In the evening his uncle came to talk with him again. "I probably shan't see you again for some time," he said. "My company is leaving Cambridge. When you see your Aunt Martha I want you to say this to her: tell her first of all that I'm safe and well and that she needn't worry. Second, tell her that at the first opportunity I want her to leave the town; it's the height of folly to remain. And, Donald"—David Hollis spoke in a low voice,—"tell her I love her. And now, my boy, good-bye, and God bless you!"

That was the last that Don saw of his uncle for many, many weeks. The next day he and the trapper went for a short walk among the narrow, twisting streets of the town. Soldiers were quartered in many of the houses, and people

were talking of others that were soon to arrive. One man remarked that as a result of the British attack on Concord and Lexington an army of twenty thousand Provincials had arisen almost overnight. There was much brave talk of attacking the King's troops in Boston and of driving them headlong into the sea.

By Tuesday, Don's ankle was strong again, but he had to walk with great care. Then early one foggy morning Glen Drake announced that the time had come to cross the flats.

The two had a hot supper together down in the kitchen, and an hour or so later they started toward the river.

Glen led the way and in spite of the heavy fog and the darkness stepped boldly yet as silently as a cat. They had gone beyond the last fringe of dwelling houses when the trapper put the end of a buckskin thong into Don's hand. "Keep tight hold," he whispered, "and don't talk."

Don thought he had never seen a blacker night—blackness and fog overhead, blackness and fog all round them, with here and there a dim yellow light. Several times, at the sound of footsteps, Glen paused to let a Provincial sentry pass unseen ahead of them.

Once they turned sharply to the left and walked for almost half an hour over uneven grassy land. Then they turned to the right, and soon Don felt his feet sink into cool mud. Glen put his mouth close to the boy's ear and whispered, "How's the ankle?"

"All right, Glen," Don replied softly.

They pressed forward slowly. Sometimes reeds and cattails swept against their hands; sometimes they seemed to be walking on firm sand. The fog, cold and oppressive, was blowing in from the east and seemed to deaden all sounds, even the quash, quash of their feet. Don's fingers were like ice as he clung to the thong. He had no idea in what direction he was going, but he had confidence in his sturdy guide. Then a bell tolled somewhere ahead, and a few minutes later he heard a horse neigh loudly.

A quarter of an hour passed, then half an hour. Finally they were among more cattails. Glen led the way cautiously among them and at last climbed a gentle slope. They had reached the Boston side.

They were making their way upward, when a stick cracked close at hand, and a sharp voice rang out: "Halt! Who's there?"

Don felt Glen's arm go around his shoulders, and in a twinkling the two were flat on their faces.

"Who's there?" came the voice of the sentry again.

Don felt his heart pounding at his ribs and the trapper's great arm pressing downward on him like a heavy weight. He heard the sentry advance and knew that Glen had reached into his belt for something.

Crunch, crunch sounded the footsteps, each louder than the last one. Glen had drawn back his arm and was gathering himself for a spring, when the footsteps ceased. A moment later the two heard them begin again, but now they were growing fainter and fainter.

Glen got softly to his feet and pulled Don upward. Together they hurried forward and did not stop till they reached a clump of trees by the side of what appeared to be a path.

"Do you know where you are?" whispered Glen.

"No," replied Don.

"Well, this is Cambridge Street. You'll have to follow it alone. Go carefully, and if you meet anyone—well, don't let 'em see you; that'll be

best. And now, good-bye, Don. Take good care of your Aunt Martha."

They shook hands in the darkness, and a moment later Don was alone.

CHAPTER VII

'UD APPLETON

Luck seemed to walk hand in hand with Don after Glen Drake had vanished into the darkness. The boy set out at once along Cambridge Street, walking slowly, pausing frequently, and keeping well at the side of the road, where the shadows were thickest. When he came within sight of the first house he stopped to consider, but the sudden barking of a dog caused him to turn abruptly into the field at the right. He crossed George Street and skirted Beacon Hill. Near Valley Acre he came unexpectedly on a large overhanging rock with two scrub pines growing in front of it; the spot was so sheltered and so fragrant and dry with pine needles that he decided to remain there till dawn.

Aunt Martha was an early riser, and it was well that she was, for shortly before six o'clock the knocker rose and fell heavily three times on the door. She left her stove and hastened to

answer the knocks. The next moment she was perhaps the most astonished woman in Boston. "Why—why, Donald!" she cried, and then caught her nephew in her arms.

Don had the breath almost crushed from his body, and the little prepared speech of greeting that he had had all ready seemed to have fled from his memory. "Aunt Martha," he gasped. "I didn't know—you were so—so strong!"

"Now," said his aunt, releasing him at last, "tell me everything, Donald,—everything!"

Hungry as Don was, he made no mention of food but sat down in the low white rocker beside the window and began with the thing that was most vivid in his mind—the skirmish at Concord.

And all the while that he talked, Aunt Martha sat pale and rigid in the chair beside him. Only once were her eyes moist, and that was when Don gave her the last of his uncle's three messages; but she said nothing and merely nodded for him to continue.

"Well, I guess that's all," said Don at last. "You know, Aunt Martha, I'd have been home long ago except for my ankle."

"I know, Donald; and I'm thankful, I hope. It might have been worse. And now let me get

you something to eat. Oh, Donald, you'll never know how glad I am to have you with me again."

It was a long while before Aunt Martha ceased to ask questions; and then it was Don's turn. A great change, he learned, had come over the town even in the few days that he had been away from it. It was in a state of siege, cut off from the outside world, and food was scarce among the poor. There were suffering and distress; many persons, like Aunt Martha, had relatives and friends in the Continental army and thought with dread and apprehension of what might happen if the besiegers should attack.

"I don't know what's to become of us, truly I don't," said Aunt Martha. "With your uncle and Glen with the army, it's most too much to bear. Fortunately, though, we shall not lack for food; the store's well stocked."

"And that stuff in the cellar, is it still there?" asked Don.

"Yes, and it's likely to remain."

"We might be able to sell it," Don suggested hopefully. Then he added, "If we could only get it to the army in Cambridge!"

But Aunt Martha only smiled and shook her head. "Don," she said, "would you rather be

in Cambridge, or perhaps with your cousin in Concord, than here?"

"I want to be with you," Don replied firmly and then wondered at the look of quick relief that came over his aunt's face.

The next day he learned the reason for it. General Gage had agreed to allow those families who wished to leave the town to go in safety. But Aunt Martha had not changed her mind. In spite of the supplications of her husband, whom she loved dearly, and in spite of the risks that she ran in remaining, she would not leave the little house in which she had been born and had lived most of her life. If she was stubborn, it was stubbornness of a defiant, heroic sort, and those who knew her respected her for it, though some called her a "foolish woman."

As a result of General Gage's permission hundreds of families did leave the town—a circumstance that greatly alarmed the Tories, who believed that as long as there were women and children in the town the Continentals would not attack. So at last the general withdrew his permission, and the town settled down to wait and to watch.

Though there was no longer any school for

Don to attend he found plenty of things to keep him busy. He helped his aunt about the store in the daytime and sat and talked with her at night. And the conversation always was of his uncle and of Glen Drake and the army, of which they knew little enough. Then always before they went to bed Aunt Martha would spread the old thumb-worn Bible on her knees and read a chapter aloud.

Frequently of an afternoon Don would take Sailor and go for a long walk as he used to do. One bright warm day early in May the two were on their way home from a long jaunt, and were walking along between the elms on Common Street, when Don observed a group of Redcoats some distance in front of him. "Here, Sailor," he called, but the terrier paid no heed and ran on ahead.

When Don was within a few yards of the group he recognized two familiar figures—Tom Bullard, who as aide to General Ruggles of the Tories, now wore a white sash round his left sleeve, and Harry Hawkins, the Redcoat, whose life Don had saved. The two were laughing and talking together.

"Here's one of the young rebels," cried Tom

as Don drew near. "And here's his rebel dog. Get out of here, you pup."

Don made no answer but spoke sharply to Sailor, and the dog trotted to his side.

"Good day to you, young sire," said Hawkins pleasantly.

"Good day," replied Don, and then colored as he observed a boy of perhaps his own age who happened to be passing with a fishing pole over his shoulder.

"Do you know him, Hawkins?" inquired Tom in astonishment and then as Sailor left Don's side and started back toward the group he added angrily: "Git, you pup, git!"

But Sailor was all friendliness as he trotted toward the soldiers.

"Come here, Sailor!" ordered Don, stopping and snapping his fingers.

But at that instant Tom's foot shot out and, striking the terrier in the chest, lifted him into the air. With a loud yelp the dog landed on his back and then, scrambling to his feet, ran to Don and stood beside him, trembling.

"I'll learn a rebel dog a trick or two," cried Tom. "And before long ——"

But Tom never finished the sentence. Before

Don could take more than two steps forward, and before any of the soldiers could interfere, the boy whom Don had just passed dropped his fishing pole, and, lowering his head, rushed at Tom. One of his fists struck the Tory squarely in the mouth and sent him reeling; the other struck him on the ear and sent him crashing to the ground.

Tom was a big boy and very active. In a moment he was on his feet and had closed with his opponent, who was easily twenty pounds the lighter.

"Fight!" cried a Redcoat. "Clear the way there!"

But there was no fight; at least it lasted only until Harry Hawkins could spring forward and pull the two apart. "Stop it!" he cried and pushed Tom's assailant away. "And you," he said sharply to Tom, "get along and be quick about it! I thought better than that of you!"

"Why, Hawkins ——"

"Never mind that; you deserve a licking, and if the boy hadn't been smaller than you, I'd have stood and watched you take it. Kick a dog! You ought to be kicked, yourself!"

Tom Bullard's mouth opened and closed. He

gulped several times and then turned for sympathy to the other soldiers; but they were laughing at him. With low mutterings he picked up his hat and strode abruptly off across the Common. The soldiers, still laughing, started toward the tented area.

Don gathered Sailor in his arms and walked to where the boy was standing; he had shouldered his fishing pole and was blowing on the knuckles of his right hand.

He was a boy very much like Don in general appearance—sturdy, active and alert-looking. His hair was of a reddish brown, and his eyes, dark and sparkling, seemed to flash with little points of fire. As Don approached him, a smile played about the corners of his rather large mouth.

Don extended his hand, and the boy grasped it. "I want to thank you," said Don, "for thrashing Tom Bullard. My name is Donald Alden; I live in Pudding Lane."

The boy grinned. "Mine's Jud Appleton." He patted the head of the terrier. "Nice looking dog you have. When that big Tory kicked him I couldn't help sailing into him. He'd have licked me, though, if it hadn't been for the Red-

coat. My, but didn't he talk hot to him afterward!"

The two boys laughed heartily. "You surely hit him hard," said Don.

"Did I?" said Jud. "Well, not hard enough, I reckon. Anybody who'd kick a dog—my, how I hate 'em! I hate Redcoats too, and Tories worse—and when a Tory kicks a dog I just boil over."

The boy's eyes were flashing again, and his fists were tightly clenched. Don felt an instant liking for him.

"Say," said Jud quickly, "do you know that Redcoat? I saw him speak to you."

"Well, yes," Don replied and colored again. "You see, I—I saved him from drowning once."

"From drowning!"

"Yes; that is—it was before Concord."

"Oh, I see." Jud seemed somewhat relieved. "Do you know the Tory?"

"We used to be good friends once. His name is Tom Bullard."

"Oh, yes; so you said. Say, come on along home with me, won't you? I live just down here in Hog Alley. I've got the finest bunch of kittens you ever saw."

"You like kittens?"

"I like all kinds of animals," Jud replied gravely.

That was enough for Don, and he accompanied his new friend past West Street and along toward the alley.

"It's no fun, living so close to the Common these days," said Jud. "All you see is Redcoats. And how I hate 'em! My father and my two brothers are in the army, and I only wish I could be there too. A drummer boy is what I'd like to be."

"So would I," replied Don. "I was up at Concord and saw the fight ——"

"Did you!" cried Jud. "Tell me about it. And how did you ever get back?"

By the time Don had told him something of the skirmish and of Glen Drake and his Uncle David the two boys were at Jud's house. A poor, miserable-looking, one-story little place it was, with a cracked weather-worn door and a window on either side that looked out across the road on a large triangular field covered with clover and dandelions.

"That's our cow over there," said Jud, "and those are our chickens. We had twenty-six, but

we lost four the other night. Ma thinks a skunk got 'em, but I think it was Redcoats."

He led the way to a shed behind the house, and a moment later Don was looking at six fluffy black and white kittens nestled in the folds of a burlap bag. As he bent over them the mother cat came running from a corner of the shed, and he started backward. Sailor backed away and sat down; he had suffered enough for one day.

"She won't hurt you," said Jud, laughing. "Will you, puss?" He played with the kittens for several minutes, stroking and calling each by name while the mother cat sat by and watched contentedly. "They're pretty well grown now and about ready to shift for themselves. That's a good dog of yours to sit there like that. I had a hard time to keep my dog away from them at first. Say, wouldn't you like to have one? Ma says I can't keep 'em all."

"Yes, I would," replied Don. "We haven't any, and a cat might be good company for my aunt."

"Well, here's a nice one," and Jud lifted one of the kittens that was all black except for one white foot. "See, she has one white shoe on; she lost the others."

"I'll call it Whitefoot, then," said Don and laughed.

"Judson, are you home?" came a woman's voice from the house.

"Just got home, Ma."

"Well, come here; we lost two more chickens last night."

"Thunder!" exclaimed Jud in a low voice.

"Yes, two more," repeated Mrs. Appleton, appearing at the door of the shed. "I counted them just now, and there's only twenty. Oh!" she exclaimed at sight of Don.

"This is Don Alden," said Jud; "he lives up in Puddin' Lane."

Don found Jud's mother a pleasant, talkative little woman who in some ways reminded him of his aunt, though she was not so old. When Jud had explained to her about their adventure with Tom Bullard and about Don's trip to Concord she insisted that he stay and have something to eat with them.

Later as Don was about to set out with his new pet, Jud whispered to him: "I'm going to stay up to-night and catch that chicken-thief. I wish you could be here with me. Can't you come back?"

"I don't know," Don replied doubtfully. "I'd like to, but there's my aunt, you know; I don't like to leave her alone. Have you got a gun or anything?"

"No; but I've got a hickory club, and I can throw a stone pretty straight."

"I'd like to sit up with you," said Don.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BOYS SET A TRAP

THE next day was fair and warm, but on the following day the wind changed, and the drab, suffering town of Boston was shrouded in a thick blanket of fog. Don rolled over in bed and stretched and yawned.

"Donald," came the voice of his aunt, "it's high time you were down here to breakfast. You're awake, 'cause I hear the bed a-creaking. Come on now; Mrs. Lancaster is coming to-day."

Don lay and blinked for a moment; then he sprang out of bed. If Mrs. Lancaster were coming, probably she would stay all night—she usually did. Don had almost given up hope of going to Jud's and of sitting up with him to catch the skunk or whatever was stealing his chickens; but now, if Mrs. Lancaster were coming, he would not mind leaving his aunt for a while in the evening.

At breakfast Aunt Martha said that her visitor would remain overnight; and when Don had told

her what he wanted to do she objected at first, as he knew she would, and then consented after he had promised her to keep far away from any skunk that might come after Jud's chickens.

At evening when Don set out for Hog Alley the fog was still heavy. The houses on the opposite side of Pudding Lane, which was one of the narrowest streets in town, could hardly be seen. And on the Common even the scarlet-coated soldiers were almost invisible at a distance of twenty yards.

"I don't know but what Ma was right," said Jud when Don reached the shabby little house in Hog Alley. "There was a skunk round here last night—a big fellow too, from the smell of him. But I had the hen-house locked tight and all the chickens inside; so he didn't get a one. I was wishing you'd been here though—are you going to stay to-night?"

"For a while, if you want me."

"I surely do!" Jud was very positive about it. There was no doubt that, even on such short acquaintance, he liked Don quite as well as Don liked him. "Well, I've got a plan," he said eagerly. "I want you to tell me what you think of it."

"Let's hear it," said Don.

"Well, come around to the chicken yard and I'll explain," said Jud. "Now here," he said a few moments later, "you see our chicken yard has a high fence and a small gate at the far end."

"I see," said Don; "the gate opens out and latches on the outside."

"Yes, and it's a strong latch too. Well, I thought we could leave the gate open and attach a long rope to it and run it through the fence on this side and back to the wagon shed here, where you and I could wait. Then if Mr. Skunk comes along and enters the yard, all we'll have to do is to pull the gate shut and we'll have him. Of course he won't be able to hurt the chicks 'cause they'll be locked tight in the hen-house. What do you think of the idea, Don?"

"Mighty good; but what'll we do with the skunk when we catch it?"

"Oh, Fred Ferguson next door will kill it for us in the morning."

"And what if it shouldn't be a skunk? What if it should be a Redcoat?"

Jud laughed. "I guess we shan't catch a Redcoat," he replied. "I hate 'em so much I guess

I was unfair the other day. It's a skunk all right; you'll see."

"I hope so," said Don. "We'd be in a nice fix if we caught a Redcoat."

"Let's set our trap," said Jud. "The first thing is to find enough rope."

The boys at once began to search the wagon shed, and by the time they had found enough lengths, had fastened them to one another and had tied one end of the improvised rope to the gate of the chicken yard, darkness had set in in earnest. Carrying the other end of the rope across the yard and passing it between the wires of the fence, they retired with it to the door of the wagon shed to wait.

"Just a moment," said Jud and crossed the yard to the house.

When he returned he carried with him a pan of cornbread and two large apples. "This is going to be fun," he said. "It's like being out in the woods, trapping."

"It is a little," Don agreed; and then he told Jud more about Glen Drake and about the trips that the old trapper and he had made together. "You'll have to come to the house some time when he's there," he said.

"I'd like to," said Jud, "but if he's with the army, it'll be a long time before he can come to Boston again."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Don. "If Glen wanted to come very much he'd come, and the King's men would never catch him either!"

For a while the boys sat silent, munching cornbread and apples in the doorway of the old shed. All round them was darkness, damp and chill. Up on Common Street a wagon creaked past; the driver, whoever he was, was singing a boisterous song. After a while he passed out of hearing; and only the occasional challenge of a sentry far across the Common broke the stillness.

Don's head was beginning to nod; but Jud, rope in hand, was wide awake. "Not asleep, are you, Don?" he whispered.

"What? Oh, yes." Don shook his head from side to side several times. "Guess I was asleep. Wonder what time it is?"

"Don't know; I've been listening for a bell."

"It won't do to fall asleep," muttered Don.

But in a few minutes his head was on his chest, and his shoulder was resting comfortably against the side of the doorway.

Half an hour passed, and at the end of it Jud

was nodding between sleep and wakefulness. Suddenly he felt a slight tug on the rope in his hands. With a start he sat bolt upright, and the next instant the chickens in the hen-house began to cackle furiously.

"Don! Don!" whispered Jud and seized his friend by the shoulder.

"What!" Don was wide awake in a flash.

But before Jud could reply something struck the fence. Jud gave a mighty heave on the rope, and as the gate came shut with a harsh bang both boys heard someone exclaim aloud.

"A Redcoat!" gasped Jud. "What shall we do?"

"Quick, call somebody!" cried Don, springing to his feet.

Both boys raised their voices and then rushed toward the house. The chickens were making a terrible noise now; and Jud's dog, which he had tied at the back of the wagon shed, was barking at the top of his voice.

Whoever was in the chicken yard was having a hard time getting out. Don, standing at the corner of the house, could hear the fellow pounding furiously at the gate and shaking it with all his might.

In the midst of the commotion a window opened in the house next door, and then a light gleamed within. "There's Fred Ferguson," said Jud. "O Fred, O Fred!" he shouted. "Come quick!"

"Judson, Judson, what on earth is the matter?" It was the voice of Mrs. Appleton.

Jud did not reply, for at that moment Fred Ferguson, partly dressed and carrying a lighted candle, which he was shading with his hand, appeared on the back doorstep of the Ferguson house. He was a big raw-boned young fellow, and both boys noticed that he was carrying a heavy stick under one arm. "What's wrong?" he shouted and advanced toward the fence.

"Somebody's in our chicken yard," replied Jud. "Come on, Don," he added, and the boys hurried toward Fred.

"Open the gate and let me out of this!" came a voice out of the fog, and Don started.

The fence shook violently, and the dog and the chickens increased their clamor.

"Open the gate, I say!"

"Leave off shaking that fence," cried Fred. "Who are you, and what are you doing in there?

Leave off shaking that gate, I tell you—if you break it, I'll whale ye!"

"Open up, then!"

"Come here, you boys, and tell me who it is," said Fred and held the candle above his head.

Both boys got a brief glimpse of the person within the yard, and Jud said quickly, "'Tain't a Redcoat."

"No; 'tain't a Redcoat," said Fred. "Now come here," he said in a loud voice. "Come here and let me see ye, and tell me what you're a-doing in there."

"Open that gate and stand aside—or—or, by thunder, I'll shoot!"

"Judson! Come here!" cried his mother from the doorway. "Donald, you too!"

There was a moment of silence, and then Fred said evenly: "I'll risk a shot from a chicken-thief."

With those words he unlatched the gate and threw it open. "Now come here and let's see what kind of a person ye are," he said and waited with club poised in one hand.

"Let me hold the candle," said Don.

He was advancing to take it when the fellow

in the yard made a sudden rush. Don saw Fred's club descend and heard it strike something hard. Then Fred went over backward, but just before the candle went out Don had a glimpse of the intruder's face as the fellow rushed past and vanished into the darkness. It was Tom Bullard!

"Tarnation!" exclaimed Fred, getting to his feet. "Can't see a thing. He's gone, blast him! What a tormented fool I was to let him rush me like that!"

The quick footsteps of the thief were becoming fainter and fainter in the distance. Then they ceased abruptly.

"Who was it, Fred?" asked Jud.

"Don't know." Fred was angry with himself and spoke sharply. "Didn't get much of a look at him and wouldn't know him again if I saw him. Well, he won't come back; that's certain."

"Judson, didn't I call you?"

"Yes'm. Don, where are you? Come into the house for a minute."

"No; I'd best be going," replied Don quickly.

But before he went he whispered to Jud: "Do you know who the fellow was? It was Tom Bullard!"

"Tom Bullard! The fellow who kicked your dog?"

"Yes; I'm sure of it; I saw his face just before the candle went out."

Jud whistled softly.

"Judson Greenleaf Appleton, if you don't come into the house right straight this minute ——"

"Good night, Jud," said Don and hurried out into the alley.

A bell was striking the hour of ten o'clock as Don reached Marlborough Street. Almost no one was abroad at that late hour, and only here and there a light gleamed soft and yellow through the heavy fog. He passed the Old South Meeting-House and a few minutes later was in Pudding Lane.

Mrs. Lancaster and Aunt Martha were just preparing to go to bed, when Don entered, out of breath and red of face.

"Well, Donald," said his aunt, "I was thinking it was high time you returned."

"Did you catch your skunk?" inquired Mrs. Lancaster.

Don could not help grinning. "Well, yes; I guess we did."

"You guess!" Aunt Martha was mildly astonished. "Just what do you mean, Donald?"

"It wasn't a real skunk that was after Jud Appleton's chickens," Don replied. "It was Tom Bullard."

"Goodness!" exclaimed both ladies.

And Don hastened to explain what had happened while he was gone.

"Wasn't I just a-saying," said Mrs. Lancaster when Don had finished, "wasn't I just a-saying, Martha, that you can't trust a Tory out of your sight? Wasn't I, now?"

"You were, Hannah."

"And Tom Bullard—well, I always said he was a bad one."

And Don was thinking the same thing as he climbed the stairs to bed a few minutes later.

CHAPTER IX

THE REGULARS EMBARK

EARLY the next morning Don was hard at work washing the windows at the front of the store. He had cleaned them on the inside and was about to start on the outside, when Jud crossed the square and hailed him. Over his shoulder he was carrying two fishing poles.

"Where are you going?" asked Don.

"Up to the mill-pond. I thought maybe you'd come along, so I brought an extra pole."

"Sure," said Don; "but I'll have to finish these windows first."

"I'll help you," Jud replied promptly and, setting down the poles, rolled up his sleeves.

While the two boys were cleaning and polishing the glass Tom Bullard happened to turn into the lane from King Street. It was clear that he had not expected to meet the boys and did not want them to see him; for he had no sooner spied them than he stopped and made as if to turn back; but Jud's sharp eyes had already caught

sight of him. "Here's the chicken-thief, Don," he whispered.

Don stopped work to look. It is to Tom's credit perhaps that he did not turn on his heel then and there. What he did was to lift his chin a trifle and, choosing the opposite side of the street, march past without looking either to the right or to the left. It was really a hard thing to do, for Don and Jud were staring at him and grinning frankly.

"He's got his head pretty high, hasn't he?" said Jud in a loud whisper.

"But not high enough to hide that bump above his left eye," replied Don.

"That's where Fred's stick landed," said Jud. "Just look how high he holds his head—just like a chicken!"

Both boys chuckled, and a moment later they laughed outright when Tom's foot struck an upraised brick, and he stumbled. At the corner of Water Street, Tom turned and shook his fist.

Jud's eyes flashed, but Don was silent. "And to think," he said at last, "that he used to be my best friend!"

"He's not worth thinking about," said Jud shortly. "Come on, Don, let's finish these win-

dows in a hurry. I wonder how the fish are biting?"

But there were other things beside fish to wonder about on that day in early May. The people of Boston knew little enough of what was going on round them. Every other person was wondering how soon the American army would attack the British, and whether the Redcoats would risk going out and fighting in the open. Already there had been skirmishes and they continued to occur off and on throughout the rest of the month; but although the Americans were generally successful, the skirmishes really did not amount to much.

Word had somehow seeped into the beleaguered town that the Continental force consisted of sixteen thousand men and that fortifications were being prepared in Cambridge and along the Mystic River; and it was whispered that men from all the other Colonies as far south as Virginia were flocking to join the army. But Gage's men scoffed at such reports; and although none of them dared venture outside the town they also scoffed at the idea that they were in a state of siege. A body of undisciplined farmers oppose them, the King's soldiers? Preposterous!

What the King's men did not realize was that many of them, especially the officers, had fought in the French wars. Oddly enough the terrible experience of the nineteenth of April was lost upon the over-confident British; they supposed that the men who had fought so valiantly at Concord and Lexington would run like frightened sheep in an encounter in the open.

Numerous things had occurred to exasperate the good people of Boston, but one of the worst was a proclamation that Gage issued; it declared martial law and referred to all who were bearing arms against the King's men as "rebels and traitors"; but, said the proclamation, if they would lay down their arms all would be pardoned —all, that is, except John Hancock and Samuel Adams.

Toward the end of the month British reenforcements began to arrive, and on the twenty-fifth the troop-ship *Cerebus* brought three generals—Howe, Clinton and Burgoyne.

Don and Jud were in the vicinity of the Green Dragon Tavern a few days after the *Cerebus* arrived. They were looking out over the harbor when Don heard someone call his name, and, turning, he saw one of the sailors who had helped

him from the water the day he had saved the Redcoat from drowning

"Hello, there, young Master Donald," said the fellow—it was Hank. "There's the boat out there that brought the three big ones—Howe, Clinton and Elbow-Room Burgoyne. If they'd side-stepped on the gangplank, I don't doubt you'd have jumped in and saved them."

Don flushed. "I'm not so sure—now," he replied. "But tell me, why do you call Burgoyne 'Elbow-Room'?"

"Why, haven't you heard that story?" Hank grinned and glanced round to make sure that no Redcoat was within hearing. "You see, it's like this: As the *Cerebus* was coming in she met a packet bound for Newport. 'What news is there?' Burgoyne shouts to the skipper. 'The town is surrounded by ten thousand country folk,' was the reply. At that the general opens his eyes wide. 'How many regulars are in the town?' he asks. 'About five thousand,' the skipper shouts in reply. Then the general's eyes open wider than ever, and he cries, 'What, ten thousand peasants keep five thousand King's troops shut up! Well, let us get in, and we'll soon find elbow-room!'"

Both boys laughed heartily, and Hank added, "Elbow-Room Burgoyne it'll be to the end of his days, now, I suppose." Hank lowered his voice. "Let me tell you something, my lads," he said. "There's going to be a big fight before many days have passed. There must be close to ten thousand Redcoats in the town now, and, mark my words, they're not going to sit idle, not they. You lads keep your eyes fixed on Dorchester Heights and Bunker's Hill."

"How do you know all that?" asked Jud.

The sailor solemnly winked his left eye and stuck his tongue into his left cheek. "The sea-gulls of the air," he said. "The sea-gulls of the air."

Whether or not Hank had secret information about the movements and intentions of the British troops, it is a fact that on the evening of the sixteenth of June, while Don and his aunt were sound asleep, events moved swiftly toward a climax. The army in Cambridge, determined on driving the King's troops from the town, took measures to fortify Bunker Hill, and then almost at the last moment changed the plan and fortified a hill that was somewhat nearer the town. All during the night the Continentals labored at

throwing up earthworks; and all the while the stars looked down peacefully, and the British men-of-war floated serenely with the tide, and the British patrols cried "All's well" at frequent intervals.

At dawn Don and his aunt were wakened by the noise of firing; but by the time they were both down to breakfast the firing had ceased.

"Now what in the world could that have meant?" asked Aunt Martha.

"I'll find out," replied Don and ran into the street.

Near the town hall he inquired of a pedestrian what the firing was.

"His Majesty's ship *Lively,*" replied the fellow shortly. He was evidently a Tory. "She fired on some earthworks the rebels have thrown up over by Charlestown."

Don waited to hear no more. While he and his aunt were having breakfast he told her what he had heard. Aunt Martha only sighed. "Who knows," she said after a long pause, "but what your uncle and Glen are over there at Charlestown?"

During the forenoon the firing resumed. The British, it seems, had brought three or four float-

ing batteries to bear upon the fortifications; but in spite of the heavy bombardment the Continentals continued to work.

The day promised to be hot and sultry. The sun, a bright ball of molten gold, was blazing down on the shingled roofs of the town and was sending up heat waves from the cobblestoned streets. Don left off his top coat and turned in the collar of his shirt.

"You don't look neat and trim, Donald Alden," said his aunt as he was about to leave the house.

"It's too hot, Aunt Martha."

"You think so perhaps. Well, don't go far."

"I'm going to find Jud," replied Don.

He did not have to go all the way to Hog Alley to find his comrade. Jud, hot and excited, almost ran into him at the foot of School Street. "O Don!" he exclaimed. "There's going to be an awful time—a battle, sure as you're alive! I was coming to get you."

"I know," said Don. "Everybody's excited. And did you hear the firing early this morning?"

"Come up to the Common," said Jud. "The Redcoats are all on parade. They're going to march off, I think."

The boys found the Common a scene of intense activity. There seemed to be Redcoats everywhere. Some were in formation; some were hurrying to join their companies that were assembling, and all seemed to be carrying arms and full equipment. The sun flashed on glistening swords and buckles and seemed to turn each bright red coat into a vivid blaze of fire. And overhead the graceful limbs of the great old elms waved gently to and fro like gigantic lacy green fans.

"Look," said Don, "there's the 43rd, Harry Hawkins's regiment."

"Yes, and there's Hawkins himself," replied Jud. "See him—that big fellow?"

Don bit his lips and said nothing. He did not dare put into words the thoughts that had come crowding into his mind at sight of the only Redcoat for whom he had the least affection.

"There's the grenadiers," said Jud; "and the new regiment, the 35th and the 49th."

"Yes, and there are the marines," added Don. "They all look pretty fine, don't they?"

"They look fine enough now," replied Jud, "but just you wait till our men get a shot at

them. You know how it was at Lexington and Concord."

Don knew indeed, and the thought of that memorable day cheered him considerably.

By now most of the troops had assembled, and one regiment already was marching off. The boys hastened to follow along Common Street.

"My, but it's hot! Whew!" cried Jud. "I'm most melted."

"I am too," Don grinned. "I'm glad I don't have to carry a pack and a musket. Just listen to the firing now!"

Although the sun was high overhead, neither boy thought of being hungry. Down Queen Street they hurried and past the town hall into King Street. People were standing on street corners and watching from doors and windows as the King's troops swung past over the rough street. Small boys, shouting loudly to one another, were hurrying along beside the splendid, well-disciplined columns; and dogs of all sizes were running here and there, barking shrilly. One little fellow, all black with white spots, ran diagonally through the column and then, turning swiftly, ran back again as if for the sole purpose of showing that he could do it.

The boys saw the regiment march out upon Long Wharf, where boats were waiting to carry them north toward Charlestown. Then they saw another and another regiment swing down King Street and move out upon the wharf.

"Are they all going to embark here?" asked Jud.

"No," replied a man who was standing near by. "Some of 'em are on the way to North Battery."

"Come on up there then," said Don.

When the boys reached the battery most of the British who were embarking at that point were already in the boats.

By now some of the people in the North End had climbed to the roofs of their houses, from which points they would have an unobstructed view of Charlestown across the water and of the men-of-war. As the boys were coming from the North Battery, Jud shouted to a man who was perched astride his gabled roof: "Hey, there, is there room for two more?"

"Come right along if you're not Tories," replied the man. "I reckon it wouldn't be safe for a Tory up here beside me to-day."

Jud, impetuous by nature, ran to the ladder

that was leaning against the house, and Don, naturally cautious but in the excitement forgetful of everything, followed him. In a minute the boys were beside the man—John Short, a saddle-maker—and were looking eagerly across the water.

CHAPTER X

FROM A HOUSETOP

THE two boys and their patriotic friend, the saddle-maker, saw the barges loaded with red-clad soldiers steering for the point northeast of Charlestown and later saw the barges return for more troops. Close in toward the Charlestown shore they could see the men-of-war *Falcon*, *Lively*, *Somerset* and *Symmetry*, and all were firing at the little redoubt on the hill beyond the town.

"Who's that walking along the top of the fort there?" Don asked suddenly.

"Whoever he is, he'd better keep down," said Jud.

"I can't be sure at this distance," replied the saddle-maker, "but from the size and appearance of him I'd say he was Colonel Prescott."

Afterward the boys learned that the man was Colonel Prescott and that his apparent disregard for the fire of the British was for the purpose of heartening the men within the fort.

About mid-afternoon all the fire from the men-of-war and the British batteries seemed to concentrate on the little fort.

"There they go!" cried Short. "The attack's begun."

The regulars were advancing in two divisions; one division moved straight up the hill toward the fort; the other moved toward the fortifications beyond the hill—which could not be seen from the roof. Burdened with heavy equipment, and with the hot sun blazing down on their heads, the British walked slowly over the uneven ground. When they had gone some distance they opened fire and continued to fire as they advanced. A few scattering shots from the hill answered them.

"Our men are withholding their fire till it'll count," said Short. "A wise thing to do."

"Well, I wish they'd hurry and fire," said Jud. "Just see how close the Redcoats are to the fort!"

The stretch of green and brown field between the redoubt and the front line of advancing regulars was growing smaller and smaller. From beyond the hill came a rattling roar of muskets and of field-pieces. Then came a heavy volley from the fort.

"Look! Look!" cried Short and in his excitement almost let go his hold.

The regulars returned the fire, and then amid the rattling, crackling hail of musket balls the ranks wavered and then broke. Down the hill haphazard the trained troops of King George retreated; but they left many of their number behind on the slope.

Meanwhile shells that had fallen inside Charlestown had set many of the wooden buildings on fire, and the flames were spreading with great rapidity. Blue smoke was curling upward from the spires of the public buildings to mingle with the deeper blue of the sky. Little tongues of yellow flame were licking the sides and roofs of many of the smaller houses. In a few minutes the crash of falling beams mingled with the roar and rattle of cannon and musket.

The regulars rallied and advanced again, but they could not go far in the face of the terrible fire that poured down upon them. As at Lexington, Don could see red-coated officers urging and threatening their men with brightly gleaming swords, but it was of no use. Again the lines broke, and the King's troops retreated, this time in greater disorder than the first.

"They're brave men; I'll say that for them," said Short.

Don and Jud thought so too, but neither said a word; the terrible spectacle seemed to have taken away their power to speak.

It was a long time before the Redcoats rallied and advanced for the third time.

"They've left off their knapsacks this trip," said Short. "They'll do better, I'm thinking."

It was only too true, for the gallant Americans had used most of their ammunition. They met the attack bravely, and then the fire from the fort suddenly slackened. In a few minutes the regulars were at the walls. Then a great cloud of dust rose above the works as the defenders reluctantly gave way. The British, who were on three sides of the redoubt, rushed forward and, swarming over the walls, sent up a great cheer, which came faintly across the water. Then they opened fire on the retreating Continentals.

The boys could see little groups of soldiers beyond on the slopes of Bunker Hill, but by now the dust was so thick that they could hardly distinguish which side the men belonged to. Intermittent firing continued for some time, and the

warm air was saturated with the pungent odor of powder.

"Victory for the Redcoats," said Jud in a choking voice, and Don nodded in agreement. There was such a lump in his throat that he would not trust himself to speak.

"Well, maybe," said Short, "but I'm a-thinking it's a pretty costly victory for old King George."

And so it proved to be. The town of Boston wore a gloomy aspect during the next few days. The King's troops, who had looked so fine on parade on the morning of the battle, went about dispiritedly and muttered among themselves at the awful price that they had paid for the hill.

When Don reached home late that evening the sound of cannon was still ringing in his ears—indeed the guns did not cease firing until the next afternoon. He told his aunt what he had seen, but omitted a good deal out of sympathy for her feelings. But though Aunt Martha had not seen so much as her nephew she seemed to know quite as much about what had happened as he did; and all her anxiety, all her thoughts were for her husband and for Glen Drake.

Almost all of the next day, which was Sunday,

she spent in reading the Bible; nor would she permit her nephew to stir from the house. "I want you with me, Donald," she said. "Something tells me that your uncle was in the battle, and something tells me that everything did not go just right."

"But, Aunt Martha, you can't be sure," said Don. "I'm just going to suppose that he was there and didn't get a scratch."

Although Aunt Martha did not reply her eyes said plainly that she wished she could think as her nephew did.

To relieve the depressed and disgruntled Redcoats the Tories took upon themselves the work of patrolling the streets at night. Every evening forty-nine of them went on duty, and once Don saw Tom Bullard, dressed in a green uniform, hurrying importantly along Cornhill apparently with a message from his chief, General Ruggles. That was the same evening after General Gage had issued another proclamation calling upon the townspeople again to turn over to him any firearms that they still possessed.

"Aunt Martha," said Don, "you know there's some powder among that stuff in the cellar. Do you suppose we'd better turn that in?"

"No," replied his aunt firmly. "Only to have the Redcoats use it against our own men! Never! If the cellar were full of swords and muskets, I'd not say a word about them to anyone who wears a red coat. Maybe some day that powder will be useful in the hands of those who really deserve it."

It was now nearing the end of June, but not a word, not the slightest hint concerning the fate of either David Hollis or Glen Drake had reached Aunt Martha's ears. Together Don and his aunt had visited the hospitals where both Americans and British wounded soldiers were being cared for; yet not a thing could they find out. Instead of feeling encouraged, however, Aunt Martha became more and more worried, and oddly enough Don soon began to feel much as she did.

One bit of information of quite a different sort did, however, seep into the beleagured town. Rumor had it that a valiant soldier from Virginia—Col. George Washington—was coming to Cambridge to take command of the entire Continental army. Don heard the news from Jud, who in turn had heard it from a storekeeper in Orange Street.

"Col. George Washington—why, he was with Braddock and saved what remained of the British army after the French and Indians had ambushed them." Don's eyes were wide with admiration. "When's he coming, Jud? Say, he's a great man!"

"He's one of the finest soldiers there ever was," said Jud. "He'll make things hum when he arrives. Give him an army and he won't be long in driving the Redcoats into the sea!"

"When's he coming?" Don asked again.

"Oh, in a few days, so they say. I heard that he's already on his way and that Congress had made him commander-in-chief just a day or so before the fight over Charlestown way."

"I'd surely like to see him," said Don. "Glen Drake knows him and has fought beside him. He says he's the finest looking man he ever saw."

"Have you heard anything of Glen or your uncle?"

Don immediately became grave. "Not a word, Jud," he replied.

The first two weeks in July came and passed, and it was known definitely that General Washington had reached Cambridge and had taken

command of the army beneath a large spreading elm tree.

Still no word came concerning David Hollis. Aunt Martha went mechanically about her housework and had got into the habit of reading much and of talking little. Other people who had relatives in the Continental army had managed to get word of them—somehow; but David Hollis and his friend, the trapper,—it seemed at times almost as if they never had existed.

The friendship between David and Jud seemed to grow stronger each day, and the boys spent most of their time together. One evening, Jud, in response to an invitation from Aunt Martha, came to spend the afternoon and night at the house in Pudding Lane. The boys had intended to go fishing that afternoon, but unfortunately rain began to fall around noon and increased to a steady, violent downpour as the afternoon wore on.

By five o'clock it was so dark that Aunt Martha had to light a candle in order to see to read. Rain was still falling, and with it came a heavy fog that swept like smoke through the narrow streets.

"It's good we didn't go fishing," said Jud.

"This is a regular northeast storm. Probably it will last for two or three days."

"Yes, and it's growing cold," said Aunt Martha. "Donald, I think we'd better have a fire."

Between the two of them the boys soon had a cheerful, crackling fire on the hearth; and by the light of it Aunt Martha became more like her old self. During supper she laughed frequently with the boys, especially when Jud told of his many pets. And afterward she played fox and geese with them. "I declare, Jud," she said, "I'm glad you came."

The evening passed swiftly and pleasantly, though outside the wind was howling and sending the heavy drops of rain spattering against the windows.

Don and Jud had finished their last game, and Aunt Martha was looking at them inquiringly, when suddenly the knocker on the door rose and fell.

"Oh!" cried Aunt Martha, startled.

"Now who can that be?" said Don and went to the door.

He opened it a crack and then stepped backward in astonishment as a man pushed his

way inside and hastily closed the door behind him.

"Glen—Glen!" cried Aunt Martha and fairly flew to meet the visitor.

Don was too much surprised to speak. He only looked on dumbly as the old trapper caught his aunt's hands and drew her swiftly into the shadows away from the window.

"Glen," said Aunt Martha, "only one thing could bring you here—David ——"

"Is well," replied the trapper and sat down in one of the chairs. "He's been sick, Martha—he was wounded at Bunker's Hill—but he's doing well. There's no cause for worry."

Aunt Martha drew a deep breath and sank into a chair beside him.

"Don, my boy, how are you?" asked Glen. "I see you're taking good care of your aunt. And this ——" He glanced at Jud searchingly for a moment.

"This is Jud Appleton," said Aunt Martha. "Don's close companion and as loyal as any of us."

Jud winced under the trapper's grip and from that moment would have followed his lead anywhere.

"I told you he'd come if he wanted to," whispered Don.

Though Glen was naturally a man of few words he did most of the talking during the two hours that he remained at the house in Pudding Lane. He had crossed from Cambridge under cover of rain and darkness and would return the same way. David Hollis, he said, had received a ball through the shoulder during the third assault of the Redcoats on the hill and was now at Cambridge, where he would probably remain until he was fully recovered; then he would rejoin his company.

Glen had had two reasons for coming, it seemed; one was to acquaint Aunt Martha with the exact condition of her husband; the other was to bring money, which both he and David Hollis feared she was sorely in need of.

For perhaps half an hour he and Aunt Martha talked in low whispers. Then he raised his voice and spoke of events that had happened concerning the Continental army, and both boys bent forward eagerly to listen.

"You boys just ought to see Cambridge," he said. "Soldiers everywhere—fine-looking fellows from up north, dark, handsome boys from

the South. I tell you it's a sight to see them on parade. And tents—hundreds of 'em of all sorts. Those of the Rhode Islanders are all canvas, but the others—why, they're part sail-cloth and part wood, and some are mostly mud and branches. And fortifications all over; Boston Neck and Charlestown Neck are sealed tight, you might say."

Glen paused and filled his pipe. "It's a funny thing," he continued; "not many years ago the settlers faced their fortifications the opposite way to protect their homes against the Injuns; now it's an enemy from the east they've got to protect themselves against."

"And have you seen Colonel Washington?" asked Jud.

"Seen him! I should say so!" The old trapper's face lighted up, and his eyes gleamed in the shadows. "There's not a better officer alive. He's what you call an officer and a gentleman, and he looks the part every inch when he's on his big horse. He wears a blue uniform faced with buff and a black cockade in his hat—but you ought to see him. I'm no hand at describing."

Glen had another talk alone with Aunt Martha before he finally shook everyone by the hand,

bade them keep up their spirits and then, muffling his face with the collar of his coat, slipped noiselessly out into the night.

"Now, you boys, to bed with you," said Aunt Martha. "And don't lie awake, talking."

But her good advice was given in vain; the boys lay awake until long into the night, talking of the wily old trapper who somehow had entered the town right under the Redcoats' nose without their knowing it.

"I told you he'd come if he wanted to," Don repeated exultantly.

"Yes, and he'll get back easily too," said Jud. "I'd pity any Redcoat who tried to stop him."

"So would I," said Don, thinking of how Glen had acted on the evening when they had crossed the flats together and had met the British sentry.

"Are you boys asleep?" came the voice of Aunt Martha.

Only the echoes answered her question.

CHAPTER XI

THE LIBERTY TREE

By the end of July both the people of Boston and the King's soldiers were beginning to feel the ill effects of the siege. One of the main troubles was the food. Civilian and soldier alike were obliged to eat much salt fish and meat—so much in fact that sickness and fever broke out, especially in the army. Don and his aunt were rather better off than most folks, for at the beginning of the trouble the store had been well stocked, and, moreover, Aunt Martha now had money with which to buy fresh eggs and vegetables.

With the increasing discontent owing to improper food individual Redcoats became more arrogant toward the townsfolk, whom they far outnumbered. There were fewer than seven thousand inhabitants; whereas, the troops and their dependents numbered close to fourteen thousand.

" Oh, dear," said Aunt Martha, " how is it ever

going to end? How much longer are we to live this way, insulted and persecuted on every hand?"

"It seems that every time they have a skirmish with Washington's men," said Don, "they take their spite out on us. Well, just you wait, Aunt Martha; General Washington will show them he means business. He can't do it now because his army isn't ready; he has to train his men. And besides, he needs more powder and cannon and ——"

"Why, Donald, where do you learn all these things?"

"Oh, Jud and I hear folks talking. Sometimes we hear when we're pretending not to. Jud says that's the thing to do."

Aunt Martha smiled and shook her head.

"We were down on Essex Street yesterday near the Liberty Tree," Don continued, "and heard some Tories and Redcoats talking. One of the Tories said, 'These stubborn rebels'—meaning us, Aunt Martha,—'think they'll do wonders now that they've appointed a Virginian head of their upstart army; but they're wrong; if great Cæsar himself were head of that army he couldn't make 'em stand up and fight!'

"Then one of the soldiers—I thought at first it was Harry Hawkins, but it wasn't—faced around quick and said, 'Were you at Lexin'ton or Bunker's Hill?'

"'No,' the Tory replied.

"'Well, then,' said the Redcoat, 'what do you know about it? I was at Lexin'ton, and I was over at Charlestown last June, and I *know* they can fight. I hate 'em just as much as you do, my friend,' he said, 'but I respect them too. They can fight. If they'd had lots of powder, we'd never have taken that hill. And another thing, I know this man Washington. I should say I do! I was with Braddock. And when Washington gets his army trained and has plenty of ammunition I tell you we're a-going to have a fight on our hands, and don't you forget it!'"

"What did the Tory say?" asked Aunt Martha.

"He didn't say anything. He just shrugged his shoulders and turned away. That's how a Tory is, Aunt Martha; he'll talk a lot and let the Redcoats do the fighting.'"

Certainly the Tories had much to talk about. It must have given them much satisfaction to see their neighbors imprisoned on false charges. Mr.

Lovell, the schoolmaster, charged with being a spy, was confined for sixty-five days. John Gill, a close friend of Don's uncle, was imprisoned for twenty-nine days for printing what had displeased General Gage.

But even numerous vexations and wrongs of that sort were not enough to satisfy the Tories. They themselves were suffering from the siege, and they wanted to punish the whole people of Boston, who they said were the cause of their suffering. Just what a malicious form of punishment they chose Don and Jud were soon to learn.

Early one morning the two boys were on their way to Coffin's Field to get bait for fishing. Each was lightly dressed, and both were hurrying along briskly. The sun was pushing its way up warm and bright and seemed to promise a good day. They had come down Newbury Street and were turning into Essex when Jud pointed to the Liberty Tree, a great elm that stood on the southeast corner. "That's what I call the finest tree that ever grew," he said.

"It surely is pretty," replied Don; "just look how dainty and green the leaves are, and how the limbs curve way up and hang over like long ferns.

Yes, I'd say an elm is about the finest tree that ever grew."

"I wasn't thinking of the appearance of it so much," Jud replied, "though it surely is a beauty. I was thinking rather of what it means. It stands for Liberty. Don't you remember how, whenever there used to be trouble with King George, folks would flock to the tree?"

"They do still, for that matter."

"Well, yes, but I was thinking of one night when I was just a little fellow. I don't remember just what had happened—the repeal of a stamp law maybe—anyway Ma took me to the tree, and there it was covered with lanterns and a big flag flying from the pole in the centre up there, and everybody was laughing and singing and ringing bells. Oh, it surely was fine!"

Still talking about the tree, the boys went on down Essex Street and a few minutes later were at Coffin's Field. Jud led the way to a far corner of it, where they began to dig.

For almost three-quarters of an hour they worked, turning over great clods of earth; but grub worms, which they particularly wanted, were scarce.

"How many have we got?" asked Don.

Jud counted them. "Only fourteen," he replied. "Let's try over there behind that pig-pen."

The ground behind the pig-pen proved somewhat better, and at last, with a fair supply of worms, the boys started back along Essex Street.

They were perhaps half-way to Newbury Street when they heard loud talking and boisterous laughter. A minute later they saw a crowd —mostly soldiers and Tories—at the corner.

Suddenly the two boys stopped short. Don grasped Jud's arm and in a choking voice cried, "See what they've done!"

Jud was speechless; his lips moved, but he made no sound. There in front of them, the centre of a boorish mob, lay the Liberty Tree! It had been cut down near the base. The delicate leaves and slender twigs were being trampled underfoot as Tories and Redcoats moved here and there, laughing, shouting and swearing. Great limbs that once had swayed so gracefully in the breeze were scattered about along the street; deep white gashes showed where the cruel axe had bitten into them. And the odor of green wood filled the moist warm air.

"J-Jud!" cried Don.

But Jud did not utter a word. His ruddy face was pale, and his cheeks seemed suddenly hollow.

"Well, what do you think of your fine tree now?" said a mocking voice.

Both boys turned and confronted—Tom Bullard.

"You dirty, sneaking chicken-thief!" cried Jud and would have hurled himself against the Tory if Don had not held him.

"Now, none of that," said Tom and retreated a step or two. Then he turned and walked away, whistling.

"See here," said a bystander, "I guess you boys feel as bad as I do about it, but don't be hotheads. They're too many for us."

"How did it happen?" asked Don unsteadily.

"Job Williams, the Tory, led the mob," replied the man. "And a mob it surely was. Such a lot of swearing and yelling—it's good you missed it. Redcoats and Tories alike swarmed up the tree like so many thick-lipped gorillas. But it wasn't all fine for them. Just before you came one of the soldiers in the topmost branches missed his hold and fell. I saw him fall; he was killed!"

"Good!" cried Jud, clenching his fists.

"That's just what I said." The man smiled. "They carted him off a few minutes ago. It was the hand of Providence that did it, my lads, and the hand of Providence will account for many more of them before long."

"Let's get out of here," said Don. "It makes me sick to look. Just hear 'em yelling."

Each boy picked up a twig from the street, and, thrusting it into his pocket, hurried up Newbury Street toward Hog Alley.

There was no fishing for Don or for Jud that day. What they had seen in the morning had taken away all their desire for sport. And Aunt Martha felt quite as bad about the destruction of the tree as the boys did. "If there's one thing I can't abide," she said, "it's spite work."

The Liberty Tree yielded the soldiers fourteen cords of wood, but they had paid dearly for it. Other trees also were cut down for the sake of the wood, and before winter set in the Common had lost many of its fine old elms.

September passed, and with the turning of the leaves Don longed to go forth into the woods. "Say, Aunt Martha," he remarked one day, "I never knew that the town was so small. There's

no place to go without seeing Redcoats. I'd like to go off somewhere in the woods."

"Have patience, Donald. Maybe if you wait, some day the whole continent will be free for you to come and go in as you please."

"Do you think the Colonies will be independent, Aunt Martha? Do you really want them to be?"

"Yes. I think it, and I hope it." Aunt Martha's lips were set in a straight line, as they had been when she had told her husband that she would not leave her home for the sake of a Redcoat.

Don was about to make some reply when he spied Jud outside the window; he was hurrying up the street, and there was an eager look in his eyes.

"Hello, Jud," Don greeted him as he opened the door. "What's the news?"

"Good news," Jud replied breathlessly. "I've heard that old Gage is going back to England. How glad I am!"

"Say, where did you hear that?" asked Don.

"Over near Faneuil Hall. I was listening again." Jud grinned.

"Who's to take his place?" asked Aunt Martha.

"Don't know yet. But won't it be fine to see old Gage go? He's caused enough trouble for half a dozen men."

The news proved to be true enough. On the tenth of October, General Gage sailed for England, never to return. Lord Howe, who had commanded the British in the assault at Charlestown, took Gage's place. He was popular with the troops, but with the suffering townsfolk he was a poor substitute for the unpopular Gage. The proclamations that he issued were irritating at best; he seemed to think only of the safety and comfort of his soldiers.

One of his first acts was to erect new fortifications. Then he requisitioned private dwellings and some of the meeting-houses for the use of his men.

CHAPTER XII

A BLUSTERING SERGEANT-MAJOR

"DONALD, someone's at the door. Hurry and answer it." Aunt Martha's voice sounded from her nephew's room up-stairs, which she was sweeping.

Knock, knock—*knock!*

"He's pretty anxious to make us hear," said Don as he crossed the floor of the living-room.

Knock!

Don opened the door and looked full into the face of a red-haired, red-coated British sergeant-major, who at once inserted his foot and pushed his way inside the room. "Who lives here besides yourself, young sire?" he demanded.

Don stared at him and thought he had never seen such an ugly-looking fellow. He was big and broad and flabby, and the only thing about him that was not red, it seemed, were his eyes, which were a pale, washed-out blue.

"Don't stand there and stare!" the sergeant-major bellowed. "Tell me who lives here."

"My Aunt Martha Hollis and I and my uncle David, who's with the Continental army just at present," replied Don.

The soldier snorted and then hurried to face Aunt Martha, who had come down-stairs. "Is that right?" he asked in a surly but milder voice.

"My nephew has told you the truth," Aunt Martha replied with dignity.

"How many rooms are in the house?"

"The living-room and three rooms up-stairs."

The sergeant-major produced a piece of paper. "Show me to the rooms up-stairs," he said and walked toward the stairway.

"Why do you wish to see them?" asked Aunt Martha, somewhat alarmed and bewildered.

The soldier made no reply but mounted the steps. Don followed him closely. After a brief inspection of the rooms they came down, and the soldier wrote something on the slip of paper. "You'll have two men to billet," he said. "So you'd better fix up that big room at the front."

"I'll do nothing of the sort," Aunt Martha said indignantly.

The man's red face became redder than ever; he started to say something, then checked himself and laughed. "Two men," he repeated and

strode toward the door and slammed it behind him.

"O Donald!" cried Aunt Martha. "If your uncle were only here!"

Don clenched his fists. "Two Redcoats to live with us all winter!" he exclaimed. "That's what it means, Aunt Martha."

"Oh, dear," said his aunt and sat down by the window. "Two—two Redcoats to track in mud and dirt and scratch and tear things with their heavy shoes ——"

"Now, don't worry, Aunt Martha," Don interrupted her. "Maybe it won't be so bad, having them here. And maybe before long General Washington will have his army ready to drive all of them out of the town."

Aunt Martha soon recovered her spirits and set about making ready for the two unwelcome guests. "I suppose if they insist on having the big front room, we'll have to give it to them," she said. "I don't see any other way out of it."

Nevertheless, she spent most of the day in cleaning the spare bedroom, and when Don looked at it that afternoon he could not help smiling. "You've made it the best-looking room

"Who Lives Here Beside Yourself, Young Sire?"

in the house," he said. "Maybe they'll prefer it to the big room."

"That's just what I had in mind," his aunt replied and smiled.

"Oh, say!" exclaimed Don, and his face suddenly became pale. "All that stuff in the cellar—what if they should discover it!"

Aunt Martha shared her nephew's agitation, and she bit her lips in perplexity. "I haven't thought of that," she said. "We'll just have to run our chances and see that the door is kept locked always."

"We'd surely find ourselves in hot water if they happened to learn that it's there," said Don. "Oh, how I hate 'em all!" he cried impulsively.

The next morning when the two soldiers came with all their equipment Don and his aunt got a surprise that for Don at least was not altogether unpleasant. One of the Redcoats was Private Harry Hawkins!

He nodded and smiled at Don as he and his comrade entered the house and were shown upstairs.

The man who was with him, a short, dark-haired fellow, stopped at the door of Aunt Martha's room. "This is it, Hawkins," he said.

" The big room on the front, the sergeant-major said, and a fine room it is. We're in luck, you and I."

Hawkins looked at Aunt Martha and, observing the troubled expression in her eyes, said, " Is this the room you want us to occupy? "

" No, it isn't," she replied. " That's my room, and the one across the hall is my nephew's. Next to his is the room I'd hoped you would occupy—since it seems you've got to occupy a room of some sort."

" That's the room we'll have, then," said Hawkins promptly and carried his equipment into it.

But his companion did not follow him; he stood looking into the big room.

" Come on, Snell," said Hawkins, laughing. " The other room is plenty big enough. Anyone would think you were six feet, five, instead of five feet, six."

Grumbling, the fellow turned away reluctantly and entered the room that Aunt Martha had made ready for them.

Both Don and his aunt gave Hawkins a look of thanks and then went down-stairs. For some time they sat in silence and listened to the scuffling of feet on the floor above them. Then Don said

in a low voice: "It might have been worse, mightn't it?"

His aunt nodded. "I suppose it might," she admitted. "One of them seems a gentlemanly fellow."

Fortunately, Hawkins and Snell were in the house very little during the daytime. They would rise early and hurry off to eat mess with their company; then they might return for a few minutes only to hurry out to the parade grounds. Usually they were away somewhere during the afternoon and evening. On the whole they were not much bother; it was the mere fact that Aunt Martha had to have them that irritated her most.

Jud's mother also had suffered. Jud told Don about it one evening at Aunt Martha's. "We've got only one," he said, "but he's a sergeant-major—big and fat and red-faced and uglier than a mud fence!"

"With blue eyes and a red nose?" asked Don.

"Yes, little mean eyes that somehow make me think of buttermilk."

"Probably it's the sergeant-major who came to us," said Don.

"Probably it is," added his aunt dryly. "I

don't see how there could be two men quite so ugly as he."

"Well, he's a billeting sergeant," said Jud, "and his name is Bluster."

"Huh," said Don. "He's well named."

"Just listen to that wind outside," said Aunt Martha; "that's blustery enough too!"

The wind had been blustery and sharp for several days, and almost before the boys realized it winter had set in in dead earnest. And with the cold came increased suffering. Fuel was scarce, and the army had hard work getting it. But they did get it, nevertheless, and the way they went about it added another grievance to the long list that the townsfolk held against them. Buildings were torn down—usually they were the poorest structures, but not always—fences disappeared overnight, and gates that had creaked on their hinges one day were missing the next morning.

In December the town presented its most deplorable aspect. Hostile cannon glowered in position on hill and thoroughfare, and insolent soldiers such as Sergeant-Major Bluster and Private Snell sat about hearthstones where once happy families had been wont to gather. Food as well as fuel was extremely scarce, and prices

were so high that more than one person was driven to steal. Faneuil Hall had been turned into a playhouse for the amusement of the Redcoats, and in it the fine spirit of the people, their intense desire for peace and liberty and fair treatment, were turned into ridicule. Even when snow fell and covered the suffering town in a soft white blanket, and few soldiers were on the streets to jostle and mock pedestrians, the guns on Beacon Hill boomed forth as if to remind them that Howe and the King's troops still held sway.

Hundreds of persons, too poor longer to support themselves, had obtained Howe's permission to depart in boats to Point Shirley, whence they made their way into the country—homeless, penniless and miserable. But still Aunt Martha's will would not allow her to yield. "No—no," she declared more than once, "I'll not go! The good Lord knows how I long to be with David, but I know that he is being well cared for. Glen gave me his word, and he is a man I'd trust to the ends of the earth."

Mrs. Lancaster, who happened to be calling, only shook her head.

"Yes, I know you think I'm stubborn," Don's aunt continued. "Perhaps I am, but I intend

to remain right here in my own home, and that's an end of it."

One day in January, Don and Jud went to Aunt Martha with a request that Don be permitted, as Jud said, to " go some place " the following evening.

" Where do you want to go, Don? " she asked.

" Down to Faneuil Hall," Don said quickly. " There's something or other going on there, and we'd like to see it."

" There'll be music," added Jud.

" British music," said Aunt Martha.

" Well, yes, but it may sound all right."

Aunt Martha frowned.

" Oh, say, Aunt Martha," exclaimed Don, laughing, " we won't become Tories—honest. It's mighty dull here these days, and we want to see what's going on. It's all right, isn't it? "

If Aunt Martha was stubborn she seldom showed it where her nephew was concerned, and this time was no exception to the rule. She yielded to him—whereas the whole force of General Howe only made her the more resolute!

" Good for you, Aunt Martha," said Jud—he had got into the habit of calling her " aunt," and she seemed rather pleased with him for doing it.

"I picked up some information to-day," he added. "Our privateers have been doing some great things on the high seas. They've captured hundreds of the King's vessels."

"I've heard of Captain Manly," said Aunt Martha.

"Well, there are lots besides Captain Manly," Jud replied. "And another thing—our men have chosen a flag; it's called the Union Flag of the Thirteen Stripes—one stripe for each Colony, you see. They raised it the first day of the year."

"My, my, Judson. Where you and Donald learn all these things is a mystery to me."

"Well, you see," replied the resourceful Jud, "if we go to Faneuil Hall to-morrow night we'll probably learn more, hey, Don?"

But at that moment Snell and Hawkins entered, and the conversation ceased.

CHAPTER XIII

A FARCE IS INTERRUPTED

Dusk had fallen over the town when Don and Jud, warmly clad in heavy coats and mufflers, made their way toward Faneuil Hall. Others were walking in the same direction—mostly officers, who stepped with the firmness and confidence that marked an officer of the King. The night was cold and dark, and few lights gleamed as they once had gleamed, cheerily, in the windows of the shops along King Street and Merchant's Row; yet there was cheery conversation. The boys could hear laughing and congenial talking among the hurrying throngs.

"I just feel like laughing good and hard to-night," they heard one man say.

"Yes, and I too," another agreed. "There's been little enough to laugh at ever since we landed in this town."

"Well, you'll laugh to-night, or I'm a Dutchman," said a third. "There's to be a farce called

the Blockade of Boston. Funny! I thought I'd laugh myself sick the first time I heard it rehearsed. I tell you the officers who wrote it—let's see; who was it now? Well, never mind; they certainly wrote a funny play. Just wait till you catch sight of General Washington!"

Jud scowled in the darkness. "Remember, Don," he whispered, "we'll have to keep a firm hold on our tempers."

Don laughed. "I'll keep a firm hold of mine, Jud; but I'm not so sure about you. You're hot-headed, you know."

"Don't worry about me," said Jud. "He who laughs last, you know ——"

"But say," Don interrupted him, "you haven't told me yet how we're going to get inside the place."

"That's so," replied Jud and thrust his elbow knowingly into his companion's ribs. "This will get us inside, I think," and he drew something small and shiny from his pocket and handed it to Don.

"A silver snuff-box," said Don, looking at it with some wonder.

"Yes; it's Sergeant-Major Bluster's. He couldn't seem to find it to-day. Funny, too,

'cause if he'd asked me, I could have told him right where it was all the time—in my pocket. Do you understand now?"

Don did not understand and said so emphatically.

Jud laughed good-naturedly. "You're pretty dull sometimes," he said frankly. "Just you let me do the talking and we'll be inside Faneuil Hall in three shakes."

"You've been doing most of the talking." Don could not resist the thrust. "So go ahead and finish."

"All right; now here we are."

The boys had reached the hall, which was well lighted and partly filled with troops. Don and Jud stood to one side of the door and watched the men as they came singly and in groups and vanished inside the great building. There were ladies too, most of them young, and all escorted by gallant officers. Jud kept a sharp lookout toward the door.

At last Don, a bit impatient at the delay, asked, "How much longer are we going to wait?"

"Just a few minutes, I think. I'm waiting for fat Bluster—ah, here he comes, isn't it?"

"You're right," said Don. "Look at the gait, will you?"

Bluster strode pompously to the door, nodded curtly to one of the soldiers who was on duty there and passed into the hall.

"Come on," said Don.

"No; just a few minutes longer. Can't you wait?"

"Say, Jud, you're a mystery to me to-night," said Don. "I don't know what under the sun you're trying to do. I don't think you know, yourself!"

"Who's doing all the talking now?" inquired Jud with a grin.

For almost ten minutes the boys waited in the cold. Then Jud led the way to the door. The soldier on duty at once blocked the passage. "Scat, you youngsters," he said.

Jud surely had his temper well in hand that night. "We're looking for a sergeant-major," he said, smiling. "We've got to see him, for we have something important that belongs to him."

"What is it?"

Jud was embarrassed—at least, he showed every sign of being embarrassed. "It's—it's

just a little thing with a lady's name engraved on it."

The soldier laughed. "Do you think you could find him in there?"

"Between the two of us I think we could," Jud replied promptly.

"Well, be quick about it then."

The boys were as quick as a flash.

"Young Tories," the soldier said to a bystander as they entered the building.

Jud turned abruptly, but Don grasped his arm and pulled him along. "Don't be a hothead," he whispered.

It was only luck that made Jud spy Bluster a few moments later in the crowded hall. The sergeant-major was sitting on a chair at the extreme right of the hall. His hat was on the floor beneath the chair, and he was leaning back with his arms folded across his chest.

More than one Redcoat looked inquiringly at the boys as they walked round the chairs and benches, and thought no doubt that they were the sons of some prominent Tory who had brought them with him. As Jud was passing behind Bluster's chair he dropped his hat and, in picking it up, succeeded in laying the ornamental snuff-

box on the hat of the soldier—a circumstance that puzzled the fellow till the end of his days.

After that the boys found a secluded corner where they stood, in the shadows, and waited for the play to begin. In front of them were Redcoats, talking and laughing and smoking. There were a great many ladies, all of whom had come to laugh at the expense of the townsfolk of Boston and of the Continental army outside the town. Fans were moving lightly to and fro, though there was no need of fans in the cold building; scabbards and buckles were clacking against the wooden seats; and the lights round the small stage jarred and flickered as couples moved in front of them to their seats.

Don and Jud said little, but their eyes and ears were alert. At last the music started, and some time later the curtain on the stage was hauled up. There were to be two plays that evening, the first of which was called "The Busy Body." The boys watched the actors, all of whom were Redcoats, and thought the thing rather dull and stupid. But the audience seemed to enjoy it; there were frequent bursts of applause and a good deal of laughter.

"Huh," said Jud as the curtain went down

for the last time. "I guess you have to be a Redcoat or a Tory to like a thing like that."

"Look," whispered Don. "Bluster's found his snuff-box."

"Sure enough!"

It was all that the boys could do to keep from laughing as they watched the big sergeant-major. He had found his snuff-box indeed. In the uncertain light his face was ruddier than ever, and his little eyes seemed to be popping from his head as he turned first to one side, then to the other. He looked at the little box; he looked at his hat; he looked at his cuffs as if the thing might have been hidden there. Perhaps he thought he had suddenly become a magician. Then he looked at the ceiling, as if to find the person—or the bird—that had succeeded in dropping it so that it had landed on his hat beneath his chair. But even a magician or a bird could not have done that!

He was still looking at the ceiling when the lights were dimmed, and the curtain was hauled up again. "The Blockade of Boston," which was to be played next, was a farce in which the character who represented General Washington was supposed to stride awkwardly upon the stage, wearing a long rusty sword and a wig that was

many sizes too large for him; behind him walked his servant, an uncouth country boy with a rusty gun. But the audience was not to laugh at the antics of the two that night.

The curtain had been up only a few moments when the noise of firing sounded from a distance, and then a red-coated sergeant burst into the hall and exclaimed:

"The Yankees are attacking our works on Bunker's Hill!"

Startling as the announcement was, it carried only a ripple of mild excitement; for no doubt many of the audience supposed that the sergeant's words were part of the farce that was to be played. "A good beginning anyway," a lieutenant who was sitting in front of the boys said to his neighbor and laughed heartily.

At that moment a general who was seated close to the stage sprang to his feet. "Look," whispered Don. "There's Howe himself. I didn't notice him before."

"Officers to your posts!" cried the general in a ringing voice.

Then there was excitement enough for anyone. To the two boys it seemed as if the whole audience rose and started for the doors at the same

instant. Women were screaming and several had already fainted. Chairs and benches were being overturned—one chair overturned with Sergeant-Major Bluster in it. Scabbards were clashing and men were shouting hoarse commands.

"Let's get out of here!" whispered Jud.

"All right; but wait till the rest have gone; we'd be killed in that mob."

"What a glorious ending to the 'Blockade of Boston'!" Jud exulted. "Couldn't be better, could it?"

In the excitement some of the lights round the stage were blown out, and then the place was so dark that you could hardly distinguish faces.

And in the street it was still darker. The boys were among the last to leave the hall, and as they stepped outside they could hear the rattle of small arms and the sound of cheering away to the north.

"It's an attack on the town," whispered Jud excitedly. "That's just what it is—a big attack!"

But, positive as Jud was, he was wrong, as both boys found out later. General Putnam had sent a party of perhaps two hundred Continentals

under the command of Major Knowlton to destroy fourteen houses along Mill Street in Charlestown and to capture the British guards who were stationed in them. Through a mistake some of the houses were fired too soon, and the flames gave the alarm to the enemy on Bunker Hill. But the daring attempt was by no means unsuccessful. Major Knowlton succeeded in burning eight of the houses and in capturing five prisoners. Washington himself was well pleased with the venture.

But the thing that pleased Don and Jud most was the untimely ending of the night's entertainment. No one thought of returning to the hall.

"Here comes Bluster," said Jud, stepping into a doorway on King Street to let the Redcoat pass. "I don't want him to see me."

When the sergeant-major had passed, the boys made their way hurriedly to Don's house in Pudding Lane, which they reached shortly before eleven o'clock.

"Well," said Aunt Martha, "did you hear anything of interest at the hall?"

"Did we?" repeated Don. "You tell what happened, Jud!"

And Jud told her, not omitting the incident of

the snuff-box. And when he had finished, Don thought his aunt laughed more heartily than she had laughed since the blockade began. "I'm glad you boys went," she said. "I'm glad you could see the fine officers discomfited. They deserve it for the way some of them have acted."

Jud was suddenly thoughtful. "What in the world will I tell fat Bluster if he ever asks me about the snuff-box?" he inquired.

"Tell him the truth, Judson," said Aunt Martha. "But don't tell him unless he asks you," she added with a smile.

"I'll tell you what to tell him," said Don. "Tell him that the last time he used snuff he sneezed and blew the box over the Old South Meeting-House, and that when it came down it landed right on top of his hat."

"Donald!" exclaimed his aunt. "Now you boys scat to bed—quick!"

"That's the second time we've been scatted to-night," said Jud as he followed Don up-stairs.

CHAPTER XIV

A BROKEN LOCK

For many days the townsfolk and the soldiers talked of the performance that the Continental assault on Charlestown had interrupted. Don and Jud joked about it frequently, but they were always careful that neither Hawkins nor Snell should overhear them.

If all the Redcoats had been like Hawkins, the good people of Boston would have had little to complain of. He was always courteous and considerate; he seemed to spend as little time as possible in the house and kept to his room even on the coldest nights. The fellow was undoubtedly a fine soldier and as loyal to his King as any of them were, and secretly both Don and Jud admired him for it. He seemed to have a genuine affection for Don, though he rarely spoke more than a few words at a time to the boy.

Snell, on the other hand, was surly and quick-tempered and an ugly person to have about the house. He was inquisitive also. Once Aunt

Martha found him trying to unlock the door to the cellar, and though he desisted at sight of her, the circumstance troubled her. It troubled Don too, but there was something that troubled him more than that. Snell had formed an acquaintance with Tom Bullard, and the two spent much time together.

"I tell you," Don said to Jud one evening in February, "I don't like it one bit, the way those two are together so much. Tom Bullard hates us like poison—I know that's why he tried to steal your ma's chickens—and I'm sure he'd like nothing better than to make us uncomfortable somehow."

"But he can't do anything, can he? You and your aunt have complied with all the town regulations, haven't you?"

Don did not reply at once. "Well, maybe," he said at last.

But Jud was not easily put off. "What do you mean?" he asked.

"I'll tell you something sometime," said Don. "Not now, though."

Don might not have told his companion his secret at all if it had not been for an unfortunate event that occurred toward the end of the month.

One Saturday when Aunt Martha had been at the home of a sick neighbor almost all morning Don entered the house in Pudding Lane and to his consternation found Snell coming up from the cellar with an armful of wood. The broken lock lying on the floor told how the man had entered.

For several moments the two stood confronting each other; Don's face was flaming, and his heart was beating a tattoo against his ribs. Snell, a bit discomfited, soon recovered his poise. "It's cold in here," he said; "I suspected all along that you had wood in the cellar."

"There's wood out in the back shed too," replied Don in a voice that trembled slightly. "Why didn't you use that?"

Snell evidently thought no reply was necessary. He crossed the floor and tossed several sticks upon the fire.

"Why didn't you use the wood in the shed?" repeated Don in a louder voice.

Snell looked at the boy tolerantly. "Now see here, young sire," he said slowly. "It won't do for you to ask too many questions. I will say, though, that if the wood in the shed had not been wet, I might not have gone to the cellar. Now let that be an end of it. Understand?"

Don was silent and bit his lips. How long had the fellow been down cellar? Had he seen the merchandise and the powder that belonged to his uncle? Or had he known that they were there in the first place? Or had he gone down merely to fetch dry wood? Over and over Don asked himself the questions without being able to answer them.

He glanced slyly at the Redcoat as he sat in front of the fire, toasting his fingers. The man was smiling to himself—a faint, inscrutable smile that told nothing. The fellow might be smiling because he had discovered the stuff, or he might be smiling merely because of the discomfiture that he knew he had caused the boy. Don could not tell which answer was right.

At any rate he was glad that Snell was not in the house when Aunt Martha entered two hours later. If Snell had been there he would have learned just exactly what she thought of him and of his inquisitive visit to the cellar.

Hawkins, however, did enter while Don and his aunt were discussing the matter. "What is wrong?" he asked, glancing from one to the other and then at the broken lock, which Don was trying to fix.

"Your comrade," replied Aunt Martha steadily, "has seen fit to force his way into the cellar to get wood with which to replenish the fire. Our fire-wood is in the back shed, and he knows it."

Hawkins frowned and then, taking the lock from Don's hands, examined it.

"There is a great deal of wood in the back shed, as you know," continued Don's aunt, "and I know that it is not all wet as he says it is."

"Just so," said Hawkins and placed the lock on the table. "Just so." And he went abruptly to his room.

"There," said Aunt Martha. "What did I say? They're all alike, these Redcoats."

Later Snell returned, and while Don was helping his aunt to prepare the supper the two heard the sound of voices from up-stairs. Louder and louder they became until it was quite plain that the two soldiers were disagreeing over something.

Suddenly the voices ceased, and the ceiling jarred with a heavy crash.

"O Donald! What are they doing?"

Steps sounded on the stairs, and a moment later Hawkins, red of face, entered the room.

" I'd like a basin of hot water, if you please," he said.

Aunt Martha hastened to get it for him, and presently he returned with it to the room. He was down again in a few minutes and went out into the street.

Don and his aunt had finished supper when Hawkins again entered the house. " Here, my lad," he said and put a small package into Don's hand. " No," he added, smiling, " it's something that you can very well accept. Don't thank me for it." And he hurried up-stairs.

Don opened the package; it contained a new lock similar to the one that Snell had broken.

" Well, I declare!" exclaimed Aunt Martha. " Donald, I believe I wronged that man."

When Snell came down-stairs the following morning he made for the door without delay, but, quick as he was, Aunt Martha observed that he carried the marks of his encounter with Hawkins; one eye was partly discolored, and his cheek was swollen.

Later in the morning Don fixed the new lock in place and then hurried off to find Jud and tell him what had happened.

The day was warm for a day in late February;

indeed the winter, which had begun with severe weather, had proved to be mild after all. The two boys directed their steps toward Walmer's wharf at the foot of Beech Street, where they sat down in the sunlight with their backs against one of the deserted warehouses.

"We'll be safe here," said Don; "no one is likely to overhear what I've got to tell you, Jud."

Jud leaned forward eagerly, and neither boy observed a third person, who had followed them at some distance and who now took a position just within hearing round the corner of the silent warehouse.

"Go on and tell it," said Jud. "You've got me all curious."

"Well, in our cellar ——" began Don, and the hidden figure near the corner of the building slunk a step nearer. "In our cellar there's quantities and quantities of linen and cloth and some powder ——" And Don told of the purchase that his uncle had made before the blockade.

When he had finished that part of his story Jud whistled softly. "My, but that's risky business, keeping it there," he said. "Just suppose ——"

Don put his hand on his friend's arm. "Not

so loud," he whispered. "And, Jud, I know you won't breathe a word of it to anyone—not even to your mother."

"Of course not."

Don glanced round cautiously. The old wharf apparently was quite deserted except for themselves. The sun was shining brightly on the water; the wind, blowing across the rough planks, was rattling the loose shingles on a small fisherman's shack beside the big warehouse.

"Now for some reason," Don continued, "Snell, the Redcoat, broke into our cellar yesterday, and that's why I'm telling you this; I'm afraid he knows what's down there, and I want you to help me if you can."

Jud's eyes snapped as he listened to his comrade's story of how Snell had broken the lock on the cellar door.

As a matter of fact Snell had not known of what was in the cellar; it was curiosity more than anything else that had prompted him to break the lock. But it would not be long before he knew just what was hidden away beneath the little house in Pudding Lane, for before Don had finished his story the figure that had been listening so intently at the corner of the warehouse

drew back and walked quickly in the direction of Beech Street. He had not gone far, however, before he turned on his heel and strode carelessly toward the wharf.

A few minutes later the boys spied Tom Bullard walking toward them; his hands were in his pockets, and he seemed wrapped in thought. "Oh!" he exclaimed as if catching sight of them for the first time. "Didn't expect to find anybody here."

"Huh," said Jud and turned his back.

Tom walked to the edge of the dock and, smiling to himself, stood for some time, looking at the sparkling waters. Then he turned and strode back toward Beech Street.

Don glanced at his companion. "It's lucky he didn't hear anything," he said.

"If he had," Jud replied with emphasis, "I'd have pushed him into the water. What do you suppose he was doing down here anyway?"

"Oh, just snoopin' around," replied Don easily. "Since he's become a sort of aide to old Ruggles he's been doing it, you know."

The boys continued to talk in low tones for some time. It was pleasant there on the dock in the morning sunlight.

Once Tom Bullard was out of their sight, he started to run. He ran up Beech Street to Shea's Lane and from there made his way to Common Street. Out on the Common some of the companies were drilling, but Tom did not pause to look at them. He crossed the Mall and then at a fast walk went here and there among the troops.

It took him almost half an hour to find the person he was looking for, and when he did find him at last he was so excited that he could hardly talk. "Snell—Snell," he began, "I've got—something —to—to ——"

"Toot, toot!" said Snell, taking his arm. "Get your breath before you tell it."

Tom got his breath, enough of it anyway to tell the Redcoat what he had overheard at the warehouse. Then Snell was almost as much excited as Tom was. He rubbed his swollen face thoughtfully.

"Powder in the cellar of that house!" he exclaimed. "Powder and fine cloth, and I like a fool was down there and didn't even see it! You're sure of it, Bullard?"

"I should say I am," Tom replied. "Didn't I hear of it with my own ears?"

"What are you going to do about it?"

"That's for the two of us to decide together," replied Tom. "There's no hurry, you know. We want to do it in the best way."

"Yes; in the best way." Snell touched his fingers lightly to his discolored eye. "In the best way," he repeated.

CHAPTER XV

MARCH WINDS BLOW

It was clear that Snell's idea of the "best way" to punish Don and his aunt was a way that would also punish Hawkins, with whom Snell was now on the bitterest of hostile terms; the two soldiers neither spoke nor so much as glanced at each other. But whatever Snell's plan was, he and Tom were slow in carrying it out.

No doubt they were busy with other things, for the month of March began in a way that promised to keep the Redcoats and the Tories occupied for some little time. On the night of the second the Continental batteries opened fire on the town.

Don and his Aunt Martha were in bed when the firing began. For a long while they lay listening to the crash, crash of the shells, which seemed to be landing somewhere on the Common. They heard Snell and Hawkins descend the stairs and pass out into the street; then Aunt Martha went to her nephew's room. "Donald, my boy," she said, "what can it mean?"

"It means that General Washington is preparing to drive out old Howe and his men," Don replied confidently.

Don was nearer right than his aunt supposed. The two following nights the bombardment was repeated; it seemed that every gun in all the forts, both friendly and hostile, was crashing forth and illuminating the sky every few seconds.

And on the next morning, the fifth of March and the anniversary of the Boston Massacre, the whole town—and especially the British high-command—opened their eyes wide with amazement. Strong fortifications had sprung up, as if by magic, on Dorchester Heights. Grim black guns were pointing at the town; grim black guns threatened the British fleet, which lay at anchor out in the harbor.

Later in the morning Jud came hurrying into Pudding Lane and entered the house; he was trembling with excitement. "The time's come!" he cried. "Have you seen Dorchester Heights? The Redcoats have either got to attack the Heights the way they did Bunker's Hill, or they've got to clear out. I hope they attack!"

"Goodness!" exclaimed Aunt Martha.

"It's true," declared Jud, "everything I've told you. The Tories are scared silly!"

"Have you seen Tom Bullard?" asked Don.

"Yes; I passed him on the way. He didn't seem scared, though—maybe he's just too stupid. He shook his fist at me, and he said, 'You'd better keep away from Pudding Lane if you know what's good for you.'"

"What did he mean?" asked Aunt Martha.

"Nothing, I guess," said Don. "He likes to talk, that's all."

Throughout the rest of the day the town was a place of keen excitement. Howe, it seems, had decided to accept Washington's challenge and attack the Heights. He was a brave man, and his own honor as well as the honor of England was at stake; he did not mean to yield weakly to a band of "rebels." He ordered twenty-four hundred men to embark at once in transports; under the command of Lord Percy, they were to land at Castle William, from which place they were to attack Dorchester Heights when night fell.

Don and Jud saw the Redcoats assemble for the attack and then march off. They saw Hawkins, tall, erect, well-composed and confident;

they saw Snell marching in another rank—and he seemed anything but confident.

By noon virtually everyone in Boston and the vicinity expected to see a terrible battle. It seemed inevitable, for both sides were preparing for it. While the British were mustering for the attack on Dorchester Heights, Washington was preparing to attack the British lines in Boston. A fine detachment of four thousand troops were on parade in Cambridge; under the command of Generals Putnam, Greene and Sullivan they were all ready to embark in boats at the mouth of the river. And, as at Bunker Hill, people had taken up points of vantage on the tops of houses and on some of the near-by hills.

But somewhat to the disappointment of Don and Jud the two armies were not to meet. In the afternoon the wind blew furiously, and a wild destructive surf crashed and pounded on the shores; no boat could possibly land with safety in such a storm. Great limbs cracked and crashed on the Common, and boards and shingles were torn from many of the houses. The two boys, hurrying along Long Acre, narrowly missed being struck with a pile of stones that came

tumbling from a chimney on a house near Rawson's Lane.

"Say, that was close, wasn't it?" exclaimed Jud. "A little more, Don, and you and I might have been killed."

Don laughed. "Come on, Jud, and let's get home. Just look how dark it's getting! It's going to rain too."

That evening the rain came down in torrents, and the wind continued to blow with unabated fury. And the next day, the sixth, found the waves in the harbor high and confused. Both armies waited; and Washington's men strengthened their fortifications.

The next day Howe found himself in a critical and perplexing situation. His army was at the mercy of the Continental batteries, and the fleet was unable to ride in safety in the harbor. To remain in Boston would be to expose his men to the greatest danger; to withdraw would be to lose much valuable property. But Howe was first of all a soldier, and after a hurried council he determined to withdraw to save his army. Preparations began at once.

"They're going, Aunt Martha!" cried Don,

bursting in upon his aunt. "The Redcoats are going to leave the town!"

"And what will they do to the town before they go? O Donald, what will they do?"

"I don't know," replied Don thoughtfully. "They could do a lot of bad things, I suppose, but, Aunt Martha, I don't think they'll do anything very bad. I tell you it won't be well for them if they set fire to any buildings."

"That's what I'm afraid of most of all," said his aunt.

Many other persons besides Aunt Martha were worried about the fate of Boston. In the Continental army itself there was many a soldier who wondered what would become of his home and of his relatives who had refused to leave the town.

After a little group of prominent citizens had sent a petition to Washington, begging him to take no measures that would injure the town, the two armies reached a tacit understanding that the British might embark without the Continentals' molesting them. Nevertheless, the American army held itself in readiness to act in case the enemy did any damage.

Meanwhile, Washington was strengthening his

defenses round the town. On the evening of the ninth he sent a strong detachment to plant a battery on Nook's Hill to threaten the fleet; but the British learned of his purpose, and almost all night Don and his aunt lay awake and listened to the roar of cannon.

The next day Howe issued a printed proclamation that almost caused Aunt Martha to lose heart. Don and Jud brought her word of it.

"All linen and woolen goods have to be turned over to Crean Brush, the Tory," whispered Don —for Snell was up-stairs. "Old Howe knows there's stuff hidden in the town that our men can use. That's why he wants it."

Aunt Martha glanced involuntarily at the door to the cellar. "We'd best give it up, Donald," she said. "I'd hoped we could keep it, but I see now that we can't. Oh, what a foolish woman I was!"

"No, Aunt Martha—no!" Don's voice trembled in spite of himself. "Nobody knows we have the stuff, and the Redcoats can't possibly search every cellar."

"Don is right, Aunt Martha," whispered Jud. "Don't you turn it over to them!"

"But if they come and search ——" Aunt

Martha checked herself suddenly, for Snell was coming down the stairs.

Without looking to right or left, the Redcoat crossed the room and went out on the street.

"Did he hear us?" asked Don's aunt.

"Not likely," replied Jud. "Now don't you say one word about that stuff in the cellar."

Aunt Martha shook her head in uncertainty, but she finally decided to do as the boys had advised.

The next day Crean Brush began his work of searching for hidden supplies. Stores were broken into, and goods of all sorts were carried off in violation of strict orders that Howe had issued. Lawless bands of soldiers, sailors, marines and Tories went from house to house and took what pleased them. And while they were doing that, the army was transporting its equipment to the water-front to be shipped aboard the vessels.

All day Don and his aunt remained in the house, anxiously expecting every minute to hear the sound of Crean Brush's men outside. Jud did not put in an appearance until after dark, and then he remained only for a few moments to say that a searching party had come to his house but

had found nothing. "If they had," he added, "Ma and I would have been as surprised as they, I guess."

Don and his aunt laughed. Before Jud went away he got Don to one side. "Say, Don," he whispered, "you've got powder in the cellar along with that other stuff, haven't you?"

"Yes, a little," Don replied.

"Well," said Jud, "if I were you I'd move it somewhere else."

"Why would you do that?"

"Well, at the rate Crean Brush and his gangs are going they're pretty sure to reach your house sooner or later; and if they search it and find that powder—well, I don't know what they won't do."

"I guess they'll do enough even if they just find the cloth and stuff," said Don. "So it seems to me I might as well leave it all together."

"No, Don; do as I tell you!" Jud's voice was low and excited.

Don laughed. "I never knew you to be so cautious before, Jud."

But Jud seized his friend's arm. "Take my advice for once and do it," he urged. "I'll help you move it now if you like."

"No, not now," replied Don. "Maybe later."

"All right, then." And Jud hurried out into the night.

CHAPTER XVI

CREAN BRUSH'S MEN

Don said nothing to his aunt about the powder in the cellar. Indeed after Jud had gone he thought little of it and of the advice his companion had given. Don and his aunt waited until Snell and Hawkins had gone up-stairs, and then Aunt Martha said:

"Well, Donald, I think we're almost at the end of the story."

"What story?" asked Don.

Aunt Martha smiled. "I merely meant," she replied, "that in a few more days we'll be all through with our suffering—or else there will be more suffering, far more terrible than some of us can bear perhaps."

"You're still afraid they'll burn the town?"

"I can't get it off my mind. Just look at Charlestown across the water. What a snug little place to live in it used to be—and just see it now!"

Don was silent for a few moments. "Everything has gone pretty well so far," he said at last.

"And maybe before long we'll see Uncle David and Glen."

"O Donald, I've prayed for it!"

"I certainly wish that one or the other were here now." Don was thinking of Crean Brush and of his lawless men.

"Ah, yes. Well, we'd best go to bed now. Another night—another night."

"Yes, and before you know it General Washington will be here, and the Redcoats will be on the water."

Up-stairs in his room, Don lay for some time listening to the sound of firing that seemed to come from the direction of Noddles Island. The night was dark, and a strong wind was blowing against the little windows. From across the hall came the sounds of snoring and of heavy breathing; apparently both Snell and Hawkins were asleep. Don closed his eyes and lay back on the pillow; but the position was uncomfortable, and he turned on his side. That position also uncomfortable, and he turned on his other side. Then his foot began to itch, then his back, then his neck. He could not sleep.

At last he sat up in bed. Now he could hear the regular breathing of his aunt; no doubt she

was exhausted with the day's worry. Once more he tried to get to sleep, but it was of no use. He raised himself on his elbow. "Now what in thunder ails me?" he thought.

There was something—something that somebody had said. What was it? The next instant he thought of Jud and of what he had said about the powder. "That's it!" he said to himself. "What if Crean Brush and his men should find it in the cellar and, drunk as some of them were likely to be, touch a light to it!"

The thought made him spring part way out of bed. Aunt Martha was still breathing regularly. That was enough for Don to make up his mind.

He began softly to dress. The house was cold, and he shivered as he put on his shirt and his trousers. In a few minutes he was all dressed except for his shoes. Then he made his way cautiously to the head of the stairs. Once he stepped on a loose, squeaky board and heard his aunt turn and sigh; but she did not waken. Neither did either of the soldiers.

Down the steep stairs Don went on all fours. In the kitchen he found the candlestick, but he did not light it until he had opened the door to

the cellar. Half-way down the old steps he paused, undecided whether to go the rest of the way. Then he took another step, but it required courage. The flickering light of the candle sent grotesque, ghostlike shadows dancing along the walls, like great unearthly black vultures.

He wondered whether he were doing right and then wished that Jud were with him. But, taking a fresh grip on himself, he went the rest of the way.

Trembling with nervousness, he set the candle on a box and looked about him. All around lay the goods that David Hollis had bought in a hasty moment—large bales and small bales piled side by side and on top of one another. With shaking fingers Don examined them, going quickly from one to another. Then suddenly he came upon the powder; there were one small keg and seven canvas bags of it lying close to the foot of the steps.

He lifted the keg and then lifted one of the bags; the keg was much the heavier. "Now what shall I do with the stuff?" he wondered.

For a few moments he stood in deep thought. The old cellar was cold and damp, and a draft from somewhere was stirring the flame of the

candle. "I know," he said at last and bent over the keg again.

With an effort he lifted it and started up the stairs. In a moment or two he no longer felt cold. It was no easy task to get that heavy keg up the stairs. From step to step he half rolled, half lifted it, and in a few minutes he was sweating with the exertion. Another thing that made the work hard was that he did not dare make any noise.

At last he got the keg to the top, and then after a brief rest he carried it through the room to the back shed, the door to which had only a latch. There he found another candle, and lighting it, set it on the floor. Five minutes later he had the keg hidden well at the back of the woodpile.

Then he returned for the bags. One at a time he carried them—all seven of them—up the steps and stowed them close to the keg. Having covered them well with the wood and having snuffed both candles, he returned to his room and began hastily to undress. He was congratulating himself on not having disturbed anyone when he heard the voice of his aunt:

"Donald, are you awake?"

Don paused in the act of removing his shirt. He did not reply at once.

"Donald!"

"Uh-hm," said Don.

"There—you *are* awake!"

"Didn't you hear a noise down-stairs a few minutes ago?"

"Noise? H'm—what noise?" Don was in bed by this time and had the covers well round his head.

He heard his aunt sigh heavily. How could her nephew sleep so soundly? The good woman was really sorry that she had wakened him!

It was not long before Don was asleep indeed. Nor did he waken when Snell and Hawkins descended the stairs in the morning. Aunt Martha had to call him four times before he roused and crawled sleepily from his bed.

"My goodness," said his aunt as she was putting the breakfast on the table, "you're surely a sleepyhead this morning, Donald Alden. Ah, well, you're a growing boy, and you need your rest."

Don grinned up at her. "You have a speck on your specs, Aunt Martha."

"Donald!"

"A speck of dust on your spectacles, Aunt Martha."

His aunt hastily removed the speck with the corner of her apron. "Now just see that candle," she said. "I thought it was just yesterday that I put a fresh one in the stick—but see how short it is now!"

Don examined the candle with great care, as if to find out what had become of the rest of it. "Why, it seems that ——" he began and then sprang to his feet.

From the street came the sound of shouting and of heavy footsteps on the cobblestones.

"O Donald, they've come. It's—it's ——"

"Now, you be easy, Aunt Martha," Don interrupted her.

Though he spoke calmly he was anything but calm in his mind. He went to the door, and just as he reached it someone pounded heavily on the outside.

"Open the door, Donald," said Aunt Martha, "or they'll beat it down."

Don flung the door open and to his great astonishment looked full into the leering face of Tom Bullard. Beside him were three of Crean Brush's men, and behind them, grinning inso-

lently, was the Redcoat Snell. In a moment all were inside, and Snell was striding toward the door to the cellar. "We'll find something this time, boys!" he said exultantly.

"Gentlemen, what is it you wish?" It was the voice of Aunt Martha, and Don, glancing at her as she stood slight but well poised beside the fireplace, thought she looked fully ten years younger.

There was something in her voice that made everyone turn and look at her. "A-hem," began one of the Tories—a big fellow who obviously was the leader. "A-hem, we've come to search your house."

"Yes," said Snell, "we've come to get that powder which you've got in the cellar." With his bayonet he began to pry at the lock on the cellar door.

Aunt Martha looked helplessly at her nephew. Tom Bullard, standing near the door, made a sneering remark to the Tory beside him, and Don clenched his fists and started for him. But he had taken only two steps when he checked himself and turned to the leader. "You've no right in that cellar!" he cried. "You've no right in this house!"

"Hold your young tongue," said the Tory sharply. "There's powder in this cellar, and we know it. That's what we want, and that's what we're a-goin' to get."

"There's not a grain of powder in the cellar," Don replied.

Aunt Martha's eyebrows lifted in astonishment; never in her life had she known her nephew to tell an untruth, even in fun.

"No powder?" repeated the Tory. "Well, now that's curious—very curious—because both these fellows say there is." He indicated Snell and Tom.

"I'll stake my life on it," said Tom, stepping forward and throwing out his chest.

"And I'll stake mine," said Snell.

"Well, hurry up and get that lock off, and we'll soon see," said the leader.

Snell inserted the bayonet and gave a wrench. Don was thinking, not of the powder, but of the bales of cloth at the foot of the stairs. In a few minutes they would find them, and then things would go hard with him and his aunt. Well, he had done his best, but what wouldn't he have done to keep them out of the cellar altogether!

"Blasted lock!" muttered Snell and gave

another fierce wrench; there was a sharp crack, and his bayonet was in two pieces.

Infuriated, the Redcoat hacked away with the short end that was in his hand, and in a few moments the lock clattered to the floor. He had opened the door and was about to go down when a sharp command behind him made him turn as if he had seen a ghost.

"Snell, you hound, what does this mean!" Harry Hawkins, gun in hand, crossed the threshold; he had just returned from the drill grounds.

Snell's face had gone suddenly white, and he only stood and looked.

"It means," said the leader, "that we're about to get some ammunition that these rebels have hidden in the cellar."

"It's not true, sir!" cried Don, turning to Hawkins. "It's not true. There is no ammunition in the cellar—not a speck!"

Hawkins looked steadily at Aunt Martha. "That is true, I suppose?" he inquired.

"My nephew has never told a lie in his life, and, sir, he—he is telling the truth now. There is no ammunition in the cellar."

"They're both lying——" Tom Bullard

stopped as abruptly as he had begun as Hawkins whirled and faced him.

For a long moment no one spoke; then Aunt Martha addressed Hawkins: "These men have taken it upon themselves to enter my house unbidden. Five men against one boy and a woman! They have no right here ——"

"Oh, enough of that!" cried the leader and strode toward the cellar door.

"Halt where you are!" exclaimed Hawkins, and as the Tory hesitated the soldier raised his gun a few inches. "Let me see your orders."

"Orders! Orders to search a rebel's house?"

"Now, see here,"—Hawkins's voice was hard and cold, and his eyes were like points of fire—"this thing has gone about as far as I want to see it go. I'll stand sponsor for the boy and the woman—and I've got a good reason for doing it. Now, my friends, you'll oblige me by leaving the house ——"

"Why—why, you don't mean to say ——" began the leader.

"At once," finished Hawkins and tapped the stock of his musket.

Tom Bullard was already outside the door, but

Snell and the three Tories did not move. Whereupon Hawkins stepped swiftly to the cellar door and, slamming it shut, quickly drew his bayonet and affixed it to the end of his piece.

"By heaven, you'll hear of this!" cried the leader and backed slowly across the room. "I promise you I'll see you in the guard-house before nightfall!"

"And," added another, "we'll be here again, and we'll bring Brush, himself, along."

Hawkins made no answer but followed the three across the room and, when they had gone out, held the door open for Snell, who lost no time in joining them. The sudden turn of affairs had left the fellow speechless, for he had expected to find the powder and then to accuse Hawkins of knowing that it was hidden in the cellar.

"Oh, sir," exclaimed Don a few moments later, "it's true, what I told you, every word of it, but, oh ——"

"Say no more," interrupted Hawkins, smiling. "Say no more. I don't doubt your word; and if I had I should have stopped them, Tories as they are. But had they been the King's men, I should not have interfered in any circumstances."

"But you've rendered us a great service ——" Aunt Martha began.

"It is nothing compared with the service your nephew once rendered me. I owe him my life, and I trust that some time we may meet again—in better days." Hawkins turned and walked to the stairs.

Later in the afternoon Don explained to his aunt what he had done with the powder the night before, and a look of relief came into her tired eyes. "I knew there must be some explanation," she said simply. "And," she added, smiling slightly, "that accounts for the noise I heard last night and for the shortness of the candle."

"Do you suppose they'll return?" asked Don.

"I'm afraid so," his aunt replied.

CHAPTER XVII

DON MEETS GENERAL WASHINGTON

Crean Brush's men did not return to the house in Pudding Lane; they had more than enough to do in the excitement of the withdrawal. Nor did Snell give any further trouble; no doubt the fellow feared the strong arm of Hawkins.

On the sixteenth of the month both Redcoats carried all their equipment from the house and did not return. All that Hawkins said as he left the room was "Better days, young sire; better days, my good woman."

"Ah, yes, let us hope for them," replied Aunt Martha.

Don only smiled, and Hawkins, as he closed the door, smiled in return. That was the last that Don ever saw of him during the war.

The following day, which was Sunday, the Redcoats began to embark; and not only the soldiers left the town, but the Tories also. Don and Jud caught a glimpse of Tom Bullard and his father carrying some of their household effects

down King Street. The faces of both Tories showed anger and mortification.

"Come on," whispered Jud, "let's get ahead of 'em and then turn and give 'em a yell. We'll never see them again."

"No, Jud," Don replied, "I'm just a little sorry for them. Oh, yes, I know Tom's acted mean, but just think what's happening to him and his father; they're going to Halifax, so I've heard, and all they can take along is just that little bit of stuff they're carrying. Their fine house up on Hanover Street is lost, and they'll never get it again, because they daren't ever return."

Jud did not reply but glanced at his companion sidewise. And so the two boys stood and watched their enemy until he and his father had disappeared among the throngs of Redcoats and Tories at the foot of the street.

The last boatload of soldiers and refugees had not been long away from the shore when the Continental soldiers entered the town by way of the Neck and by boats across the river. The boys spied one of the first patrols on the southern end of the Common and hastened toward them.

"I want to find out first of all about Uncle Dave and Glen," Don said to Jud.

But none of the men in the patrol knew either of the two men. Kindly fellows they were, all of them, and they laughed and joked with the boys and with one another as they marched along toward the Mall.

"Say!" exclaimed Jud when they had gone past. "I'm so glad to see those buff and blue uniforms I can hardly say how I feel. I feel as if I'd burst!"

"Me, too," said Don, "except that I almost feel like—well, like when you're so happy it makes the tears come into your eyes. Look, here come some more of our men!"

Probably most of the good people of Boston felt as Don and Jud felt; certainly there were many who shed tears of joy as they stood in their doorways and watched the various detachments of Continetnals arriving. There was good reason for the tears, for the people who shed them had suffered like martyrs during long months of privation, insult and oppression—to say nothing of disease, for smallpox had broken out in the poorer parts of the town.

The first words that greeted Don as he entered

his aunt's house were, "Donald, my boy, did—did you see your uncle?"

"No, Aunt Martha. I asked at least a score of our men about him, but none of them seemed to know him. But, O Aunt Martha, ain't it fine! The Redcoats are gone!"

"When I've seen your uncle I shall rejoice," his aunt replied and turned quickly away.

One thing that annoyed Don the following day was that he failed to see General Washington, who had entered the town and had dined with Mr. James Bowdoin at the home of Mr. Erving, both of whom were friends of Don's uncle. Nor did Don see Washington the next day, for the general had returned to Cambridge.

On Wednesday, the twentieth, the main body of the Continental troops entered the town, with flags flying and drums beating.

"Watch out for my uncle and for Glen Drake," Don said to Jud as the two boys stood on a crowded street corner waiting for the head of the column to appear.

"Yes, and you keep your eyes open for my father and for my brothers."

From far off came the sound of drums and fifes. The crowd at the corner, mostly boys and

women, moved uneasily. "It's Yankee Doodle they're playing," whispered Jud. "Say, doesn't that sound good!"

"It surely does!" agreed Don.

In a few minutes the regular tramp, tramp of marching feet reached the ears of the eager little group.

"Here they are!"

A cavalcade of horses, white, black and chestnut, had turned a corner. Behind them came the foot soldiers, resplendent in buff and blue, ruddy of face, keen of eye.

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" Don and Jud swung their caps high into the air. "Hurrah!" cried the rest of the little group.

But for the most part the main body of Continentals were greeted with few cheers. The people of the besieged town had suffered too much under Howe and the British; most of the inhabitants remained at doors and windows and were content to wave their hands.

"There he is!" cried Jud.

"Who? Who?"

"General Washington! See, there on the big horse! Don, just look how ——"

But Don was not listening. All his attention

was given to the man who sat with such ease and dignity on the big horse. Never had he seen anyone who looked so thoroughly like his ideal of a soldier. Tall and well-proportioned, the general looked truly noble and majestic. His coat was blue with buff facings, and on each shoulder he wore a rich epaulette. His under dress was buff, and he wore a black cockade in his hat. At his side hung an elegant small-sword.

The cavalcade swung past, and the two boys turned to each other at the same time. "Jinks!" exclaimed Jud. "Wasn't he fine!"

"Fine!" echoed Don and with a deep sigh turned again to view the troops.

Several ranks of foot soldiers had already passed, but the boys sharply scrutinized those who were approaching. Company after company swung past. Then Jud suddenly spied his father and the next instant one of his brothers. Both recognized him and smiled as they passed. A few minutes later he spied the other brother.

Don was worried; not a man had he seen who looked in the least like his uncle or Glen. Company after company, regiment after regiment, marched by, and somehow Don felt his lips beginning to quiver.

"It's too bad, Don," said Jud. "I'd hoped we'd see Glen and your uncle right off. Here's the end of the column. Maybe they'll come later."

Don made no answer; he was wondering how he could tell his aunt that Uncle David had not entered with the troops. He bit his under lip. Maybe his uncle's wound had not healed. Maybe ——

"I'll see you later, Don," Jud was saying. "Won't Ma be glad when I tell her!"

Don made his way dejectedly to the little house in Pudding Lane. He could just picture his aunt's face when he told her the news. He opened the door and with head down stepped inside; the next instant, when he lifted his eyes, he could hardly believe what he saw. There, standing beside his aunt near the fireplace, resplendent in a captain's uniform was—David Hollis! His arm was round Aunt Martha's waist, and she was laughing and crying both at the same time. And there in one corner of the room, looking almost as he had looked when Don had first seen him, was Glen Drake!

"Donald, my lad!"

Don felt the breath almost squeezed from his

body, for his uncle was a big man. And then he felt the bones in his hand crunch as the old trapper greeted him.

"Oh, this seems almost too good to be true!" Aunt Martha was saying.

For the next fifteen minutes questions and answers followed one another in quick succession. Then at last Don asked gravely: "Uncle David, where did you come from? I never saw you in the column."

David Hollis laughed heartily. "I saw you, though; my company led the column. But you were so interested in our general that you didn't have eyes for anybody else."

"Never mind, Don," said Glen; "he's a fine man to look at, the general is."

"What a hard time you've had here!" said Uncle David. "Your aunt has been telling me. My boy, I'm proud of you for the way you've acted and especially for the way you kept the Redcoats from getting that stuff in the cellar."

"Yes, Don, you sure played the fox that time," said Glen. "And now that the Redcoats have gone, I'm thinking you and I and that other boy will be able to do a little trapping in the woods together."

"Now, David," said Aunt Martha, "what are we going to do with the stuff in the cellar? I don't want it to remain there; truly I don't."

David Hollis laughed and turned to his nephew. "It's yours, Donald," he said; "you've earned the right to it, I think; do with it as you wish. Perhaps you can sell it."

"Me—sell it!" exclaimed Don.

"It's yours. My friend in the South doesn't want it."

"With all that cloth you won't have to worry about breeches now for the rest of your life, Don," said Glen grinning.

Don did not reply; he was thinking hard.

The next morning while Glen and his uncle were with the troops he entered the cellar and spent almost an hour making a list of the supplies that were there. Then he hurried up-stairs and went out into the street.

Half an hour later he was standing in front of a lieutenant in a large hallway. "I'd like very much to see General Washington," he said.

"Indeed," said the lieutenant; "and what may be your business?"

"I have something to give him."

"Indeed. You don't look as if you had much

to give." The lieutenant smiled good-naturedly. "I'm sorry to have to turn you away, but the general is a busy man these days."

Don fell back a pace and looked around him.

"I'm sorry ——" the lieutenant was saying, when a door opened, and a tall figure stepped into the hall.

Like a flash the lieutenant and several other officers who were standing near by snapped to attention. It was Washington himself that was walking quietly toward the entrance. Don gulped once, and then before he knew what he was doing he had exclaimed:

"Sir—General Washington!"

The general turned, and Don pulled his slip of paper from his pocket and handed it to him. "This is a list of goods that were in our cellar all during the occupation," he said. "My uncle, Capt. David Hollis, gave them to me for keeping the Redcoats from getting them. I want to give them to our army."

Washington glanced at the paper—he seemed to read everything on it in a single glance—and then turned to the boy. "The army will be very grateful to have these supplies," he said. "I thank you, my boy. You are a true patriot."

Don colored to the roots of his hair as he watched the general hand the paper to the lieutenant and then turn and smile and pass into the street.

"Donald!" cried Aunt Martha as Don burst noisily into the room. "What's the matter?"

"I gave the supplies to Washington!" cried Don. "I saw him, Aunt Martha, and he said the army would be glad to get them. You know they need stuff for uniforms, and especially powder."

"Good for you, Donald! It's the best thing you could have done with them."

"And, Aunt Martha, he said I was a true patriot!"

"You are, Donald; you've helped the cause."

In another minute Don was, closely followed by Sailor, on his way to Hog Alley to tell Jud the news. His eyes were bright, and his face was flushed as he ran along the streets, which now were filled with Continental uniforms. He had done something to help his country at last.